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# Indian Child Art



by Gay Hellier

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INDIAN CHILD ART

*A Handbook for Teachers*

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‘THE YELLOW SARI’

Water colour by Malathi, aged 13, of Ewart School, Madras;  
size, 7" x 9½". Pupil of Sri P. L. N. Murthi.

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INDIAN CHILD ART

*A Handbook for Teachers*

*by*

GAY HELLIER, M.A. (Cantab.)

Gnanodhaya Training School, St Thomas' Mount, Madras



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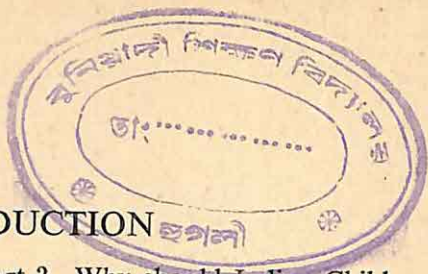
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## INTRODUCTION ପ୍ରସଙ୍ଗ

WHAT do we mean by Child Art ? Why should Indian Child Art be different from that of other countries ?

The name Child Art stands for a new outlook in school art work which is part of the new outlook in education. Recently, in the West, a much greater importance has been given to the teaching of art and art crafts. More time has been given to art and it is better taught than formerly. Educationists realize that, along with music, dancing and dramatics, it plays an important part in training the emotions and in giving an outlet to creative power. Such subjects are of value for the psychological development of pupils, helping them to adjust themselves to life, to solve some of their problems and to become balanced personalities. In India, too little importance has been given to these non-literary subjects. Some teachers perceive this lack ; and the eagerness of pupils, especially of girls, to learn art is also an indication of their real need for it. This point will be elaborated when we come to study the effect of art work on the pupils. Here we may say that any attempts in India to deal with the matter are few and far between. Books written in the West presuppose opportunities, apparatus and trained teachers such as are not to be found in India at present.

This book is an account of experiments tried in India with Indian children. By describing what has been done with average children, often under unfavourable conditions, it shows what might be tried with others. The classes were often large, the pupils too poor to buy much equipment and they worked in ordinary classrooms. None of them had gone beyond the second year of new art methods. Although some of the work here reproduced is the work of pupils between 15 and 20 years of age, they drew in a style usually characteristic of much younger children. Many of them came from villages. All had received only an elementary or middle school education and none had received any previous art training. The very small amount of school drawing they had done could hardly be counted and did not seem to have any effect on their later work.



Some of the work was done by students training to be teachers but the work of the younger ones was done in elementary schools, often the result of a practice lesson taken by student-teachers with children who had not done this type of work before. Painting with water colours or powder colours aroused the greatest enthusiasm and produced the best results ; but pencil and paper, or even slate and slate pencil, produced very good and original work and it was interesting to note that the same quiet absorption occurred when a class was doing free expression on slates, as when they were painting. In the primary classes of elementary schools, the work, sometimes disappointing at first, grew gradually more original and interesting as time went on. Class teachers and ordinary students also developed a discriminating judgement as to what constituted good work.

In the primary classes the children usually had two 40-minute periods for art each week. The older pupils had a double period once a week and a handwork period as well. This proved sufficient to initiate them into the new methods. Within a few weeks they were doing original pattern work. By the end of their second term, they were painting pictures with figures in them. During the third term they became more skilful in their use of colour and freer in their picture making. Their second year proved a time of development along their own lines, when work became neater, surer and often richer in content. None of them within this time came to the end of his power to invent pictures. Taste varied from pattern making to picture making and flower painting, and there were times when all wanted to draw from life.

This book concerns itself with the ordinary child. In most classes there are a few somewhat gifted children and others who are below the average ; but their work is typical of their age. Children who are abnormally gifted do work that is far beyond what is typical of their age and their work is not really Child Art at all ; it is adult art done at an unusual age.

The illustrations are taken from the unaided work of Indian children, but the exigencies of reproduction necessitated the copying of many, as faithfully as possible, in black and white. The originals were done in powder or water colour, in crayon, pastel, pencil, or on slates. Some were as large as 16'' x 20'' :



some were about 4"  $\times$  5". Most of the work was done by girls, but some was by boys and boys would probably do much the same type of work if given the chance. Indian children are specially strong in line work and make little use of paint except to give flat washes, so the drawings have lost less in reproduction than if they had depended for their merit on the quality of the painting. Of course, in the pupils' eyes the bright colours of the paint are a great addition. We must use our imagination on this point when we look at them.

The masculine gender has been used throughout the book when referring to teachers and pupils, but it must be understood to include women and girls. All the work shown here is, in fact, taken from lessons given by women teachers.

The book has been divided into four parts. Part I deals with the aims and outlook of the new art teaching; Part II with the actual methods of teaching drawing and painting in the primary and secondary classes; Part III refers to various allied art crafts, and Part IV deals with the training of teachers and the teaching of art appreciation in schools.

There is some reference, near the end of the book, to pupils who have perhaps gone beyond the age of Child Art in the strict sense, but it has been convenient to include all the work done by school children who are not specializing in art.

The syllabus prescribed for drawing and painting in Madras Secondary Schools is included as an appendix (by kind permission of the Government) since it follows the lines advocated in this book. It also provides for a special or bifurcated course in art which will take ten or twelve periods a week and is intended for those with special gifts who may later take it up as a profession. There is also a fairly detailed book list for the use of teachers in which will be found further information about all books mentioned in the footnotes.

Our conclusion is that there is a great deal of unused talent and artistic ability latent among Indian children. What work they have done on modern lines is full of freshness and spontaneity. It shows a child's view of Indian life and has a charming quality of composition and decoration that is typically oriental. It may be partly through the work of Indian children that India will realize her artistic destiny.



*'AND not painting with the colours that you told us to use, we painted with those which satisfied our hearts' desire. The paint box had no rest, it was like "a garland in the hands of a monkey". Until your return we shall be "like parched land waiting for the monsoon showers".'*—Translation of a passage in a Tamil farewell address to a teacher of Child Art

Part I

THE OLD AND THE NEW ART TEACHING

## THE OLD TYPE OF DRAWING LESSON

FIRST of all, let us examine closely the outlook and aims of the old art teaching and contrast them with the new because, again and again, supporters of the new methods are asked: 'Why do you not teach such-and-such? We always used to do it. It seems the proper way to teach art. Why do you leave it out? How can anyone be proficient without it?' The answer must be: 'Please realize that we have quite changed our aims. Though what we do still has the same label as before, we are trying to achieve something different. On the way we may seem to be doing some of the same things that we used to do, but we are doing them from a different angle with other aims. Therefore we tackle them differently. Also, do not take for granted that what was formerly done was necessarily the best thing for high school pupils to do. Just consider the aims of the teachers of those days; perhaps they were wrong.' Above all, ask any critic: 'Did you like drawing when you were at school or did you hate it? Did most people like it or hate it?' He will usually groan at his recollection of the art lesson, or at least admit that the average pupil disliked or was bored by drawing. Then ask a critic to watch a class of small children or high school pupils doing their modern art work. The universal enjoyment, the keen absorption, the quietness, the reluctance to stop are arguments that weigh with any modern teacher, whatever the educationist of last century may have thought.

It is the joy of the ordinary child in the new type of art lesson that convinces many art teachers of its rightness. They themselves may have been satisfied with the art teaching they got from keen teachers because they were probably naturally gifted. Yet they remember very well how bored their less artistic friends were with the ordinary drawing lesson. In our education we must distinguish carefully between what is going to benefit the majority of the class and what is going to benefit a small section of it, and arrange our work accordingly. In this book, as stated in the Introduction, we are concerned with the average pupil rather than with the small group of specially artistic children.



The benefit of the teaching of any subject cannot be judged by its results on the best children in the class. Art teachers often forget this and feel depressed about their own pupils as they compare their work with that of other schools displayed in exhibitions or reproduced in books. They forget that they only see displayed the work of the best pupils. There is also the rest of the class to be considered, however; and under the old system 80 per cent of them often produced messy failures—sheets and sheets containing little but rubbing out—in which the pupils had found no satisfaction and at which they had worked slowly and inattentively. Yet the work of these ordinary children must also be taken into account in judging the total result of the art lesson.

The aim of the drawing teacher in former years was to impart skill in representation and the ability to draw an object realistically with its proportions correctly indicated. He wished his pupils to represent a three-dimensional object in two dimensions. He tried to get them to put down on paper, as nearly as possible, exactly what the eye saw. To do this he gave lessons in linear perspective and the perspective of ellipses. His pupils drew tumblers above, below and at eye level, and made perspective sketches of boxes and large books with all the lines ruled to reach eye level at the vanishing-point. They learnt to show light and shade, cast shadows, high lights and reflected lights. To do this, there had to be a small group of pupils sitting in full view of the group of objects carefully arranged so that the light fell on it from one side only. Each pupil got a slightly different view of the group and was expected to draw it exactly as it appeared from his position. This is still the main requirement of many drawing examinations in this country.

When pupils drew figures, whether from life or from memory, they tried, or were expected to try, to indicate the structure of the human body under the clothes, its poise and balance. They attempted to show its solidity, the form of the skeleton and muscles and the proportions of limbs, trunk and head. This is the beginning of figure drawing as it is taught at the art school; and, in so far as pupils drew figures at school, they had to work along these lines. No wonder most of them were 'bad at figure drawing'. When they made plant studies, they drew them



exactly as they saw them, one leaf hiding another, flowers turned full face or half turned away, leaves folded or turning over. With despair they tried to draw every petal of some head crowded with florets. Halfway through the lesson they found that their specimen had faded and its leaves had taken up different positions, so they had to start again.

Anyone training to be an artist in the West might expect to go through this discipline. It represents the craft of the delineator that has been slowly discovered and passed on from early times, through medieval days and Renaissance work, up to the present. During the Renaissance in Italy and Flanders, artists were learning this business of realistic representation; Raphael, Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci are examples of very great draftsmen who knew far more about realistic representation than the artists of the previous century. After these masters, hardly anything further was left to be discovered about light and shade, figure drawing and perspective.

But two things need to be said about this. First, the great masters may have advanced in realistic representation but it was other qualities in their pictures that made them great art. Many lesser artists have followed them and in their work we get realism without art. This is not recognized by the untrained observer. All he asks is an interesting subject realistically represented. This is his idea of a fine picture. We need to train our vision to perceive what it is that the great masters have and the common artists have not. But here we are merely noting the development of the tradition of realistic representation in the West which did not take place in the East.

Secondly, we should note that, though the craft of realistic representation may be a suitable subject for the art school, it does not necessarily play a part in the normal education of everyone. One wonders how it came into English secondary education, why boys and girls were so earnestly instructed in the representation of cubes and cones and spheres, those queer white objects stored in the art room, and why they had to copy freehand the designs given in outline drawings. Painting in water colours was indeed taught to young ladies as an accomplishment; but, as they usually copied the sketches of their master, the exercise had little artistic value.



What did the educators hope to achieve by this method of teaching? Some technical proficiency but no originality. It was not guaranteed to give joy or satisfaction to the pupil and it gave no scope for individuality. It was a craft and there was one right way to do it. The master's business was to see that the pupil learnt it. Such teaching was typical of the education of those days which consisted in the acquirement of a number of skills, irrespective of any immediate or ultimate purpose to which they might be put. No care was taken to see whether they were really appreciated by the pupil or helped him to grow. In the same way children were made to learn the piano though they disliked it, and they spent years learning English grammar without being able to write or appreciate good English prose. Parents and school authorities decided what should be learnt and how it should be taught, and the pupil's duty was to do as he was told.

It may nevertheless be maintained that an ability to draw what you see is a useful accomplishment in life. Only a small proportion of people, however, are endowed with this ability, although they were taught drawing at school. It is of benefit to these few; and those who want to, should be given a chance to learn perspective and figure drawing. They will probably learn it much faster than the bulk of the class, for they get on so much more quickly and are bored waiting for the others. To teach these few does not involve the struggle and effort and failure and correction that go on in the usual lessons on perspective. Further, it is useless to 'learn to draw because it will be so useful in later life'. One does not learn to draw for some vague purpose like that. If you need to draw for botany, physiology, carpentry or blackboard work, then learn in the particular lesson itself. Let the teacher of that subject devote some attention to producing the kind of fine, accurate, diagrammatic drawings he wants and show examples of the thing required. If he concentrates on this, the pupils can acquire the technique. Presumably they will learn the necessary subject-matter in the course of their study and will draw because they want to show something they have observed. This is one very good reason for drawing, much better than drawing something because you have been told to do so.



Even if the teacher's purpose is to produce skill in realistic representation, this may be achieved best by giving the pupils art lessons that interest them. If they are not interested, they will not do good work and so will not become proficient—no matter how many lessons they are given. Pupils have been known to spend half a term on the type of free painting described in this book and then to be given object drawing. To everyone's surprise, they were better at it than those who had spent the whole term on it. They had acquired the habit of doing their best in their drawing lessons. They had got so used to working hard to draw what they wanted to draw that when, for a change, they were asked to draw what they saw before them they did it with confidence and some skill. Apparently they found the new problem stimulating.

Or it may be that an unsatisfactory syllabus is prescribed and cannot be changed. If so, the teacher can try to find a way round the difficulty. In one training school, for example, the drawing syllabus consisted entirely in copying pictures and diagrams for practice teaching and learning to draw on the blackboard. The drawing periods, however, were devoted to the new type of art work and nothing was done in them towards working the syllabus. The students were left to do all the other work without supervision. They made quantities of illustrations and charts, reading apparatus and blackboard diagrams with speed and fair efficiency. Moreover, the teaching aids required by the syllabus were done much more effectively in paint than those usually produced in chalk which are faint and rub off. The students were thus able to do all the work prescribed and the new art work as well. Their interest in the new type of work seemed to lead to speed and confidence in the other. Where there is a tradition of art work, students begin to believe that they can do anything and do it quickly. They do the new type of work and the copied work quite happily side by side.

By 1910, ideas in England were beginning to move in the direction of the new methods in art teaching. Unfortunately, however, it was the ideas of 1900 and earlier that were embodied in Indian school drawing syllabuses. They also, of course, dominated the examinations for teachers of drawing. In the West, these methods were at least in line with what was used





FIG. 1. Figure drawn from life and painted from memory by Manoraham, aged 17. Pencil and water colour on white paper ; size 10" by 11". Note the harmony of the composition, the placing of the figure and the addition of details from imagination.

in current indigenous art. In India, they were utterly divorced from the art of the people. Moreover, in England in the secondary school there was usually an art room and a chance for the



class to make drawings from actual objects under correct conditions (though elementary schools could not achieve this at that date). In India this was so seldom the case that the usual thing was for pupils to copy the drawings made by the art master on the blackboard! So drawing has gone on in India. In some States the syllabus for the Drawing Teacher's Certificate includes little but pencil drawing and nothing else seems to be taught in the schools. Copying from the blackboard is the usual procedure. Numerous books are published giving examples of the 'correct' drawing of every object required for the examination and the pupil merely has to copy these repeatedly till he knows them by heart. He need never draw from observation of the object itself. Needless to say, this is not art—not even representational art.

And these conditions are still almost universal in India. In many places, school drawing is omitted from the curriculum or made optional. In training schools, the only drawing taught is similar to that provided in the syllabus mentioned above; and the drawing and painting examinations which qualify an art teacher are still hopelessly old-fashioned and mechanical. Nevertheless, there are signs that a new spirit is coming into school art. Madras has prescribed a syllabus on modern lines; Bombay has started a Child Art society; Bengal has schools that do good modern work. An excellent art department has just been started at the Lawrence School, Lovedale, Nilgiris, generously supported by the Government of India. The way may be long—and without inspired teachers, no scheme or syllabus can produce good art—but a beginning has been made.

## THE COMING OF THE NEW ART TEACHING

### *New ideas in education in general*

THE change in methods of art teaching in the West is, as has been said, part of a change in the whole outlook on education under which the child is made the centre. Subjects are regarded, not as ends in themselves, but as means to the development of the pupil. Learning by doing is encouraged. The pupil learns practically, by handling and making things, and less of his time is now spent at his desk with a textbook or a written exercise. This approach means that children very often choose what they will do. They may work individually, each doing a different thing, or they may sometimes co-operate in a group activity, moving about, making things and talking as they do it.

Contemporaneously, there has been a great development in the understanding of child psychology. Educators now realize that different children need different treatment, that there are emotional disturbances to be corrected and natural instincts that must be given outlet. Children must be as fully developed as possible at the stage they have reached. Then only is there a chance that they will grow into satisfactory adults. We should not try to force on them adult characteristics before their time. It is futile for teachers to ignore their present psychological make-up and try to give them a cut-and-dried training without regard to the material they are dealing with. They must build on the foundation that actually exists.

In nursery schools, kindergartens and some primary schools, these ideas have been put into practice. Secondary schools, however, are so much subject to the pressure of examinations that these trends are more rarely found there.

### *New ideas in art teaching*

This change has shown itself very clearly in the development of art teaching. The introduction of colour, both water colour and crayon work, did much to popularize art work. The painting lesson became a weekly joy where the old drawing lesson had been a burden. This change was brought about in



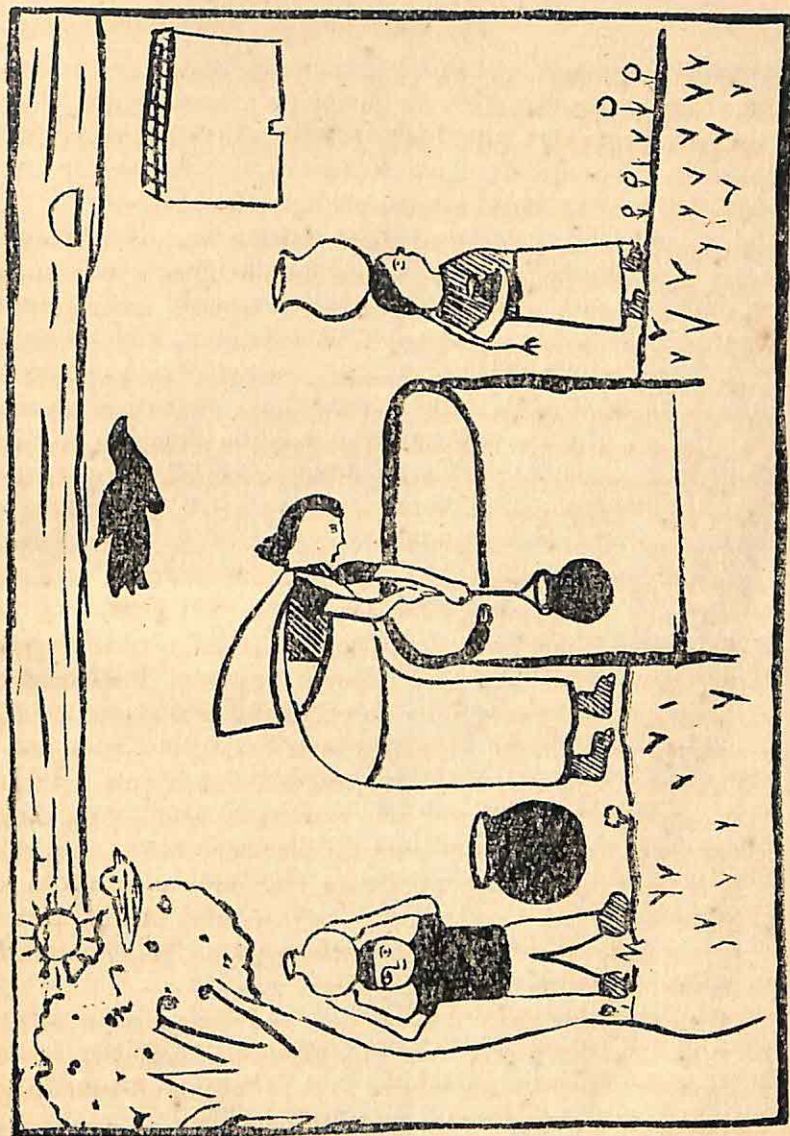


FIG. 2. 'Drawing water.' Imaginative composition by Jeyamoni, aged 19. Water colour on white paper; size 8½" by 13". This pupil draws in the style of a much younger child and yet her picture makes her meaning clear most forcibly.

England in connexion with a series of drawing examinations that demanded water-colour work, the drawing of flowers and 'the candidate's own selection' as well as the old perspective drawing of groups of objects. The Royal Drawing Society began to conduct an annual exhibition of school art work; and so, gradually, there came a long period when art in schools was given importance and good facilities provided for it. Even so, the work done was still largely representational and followed the teachers'—not the pupils'—ideas and direction.

In kindergartens and infant schools, children were encouraged to make their own imaginary pictures though these were usually very tiny. They also had much clay modelling and work with paper and cardboard. Unfortunately the teacher always supplied instructions and all the models were alike. Neatness and obedience were the chief demands.

Then, about 1920, teachers in England and America became aware of the remarkable work done by Professor Cizek and his young pupils in Vienna. He has been called the Father of Child Art. He had weekly classes for Viennese children and they produced wonderful original pictures painted in bright colours. Some of his pupils were as young as three years old. His adolescent pupils achieved most finished pictures. When these pictures were shown on exhibition in England they caused amazement. Gradually teachers in other countries have tried and found to their astonishment that they too can achieve surprising results.

Meanwhile psychologists were explaining why children draw as they do and making us see that their curious scribbles are not meaningless but depend on certain psychological laws that apply both to children and to primitive people. The result has been that educationists have learnt to give colour and materials of various kinds to children for their art work. Schools now find a place for art in the time-table, from the lowest class to the highest, and provide proper art rooms. A long training course is prescribed for teachers of art in secondary schools, and many art schools give much space and attention to those training to be art specialists.

More recently, the new ideas have dominated the actual teaching (though even now they are not universally practised in



Western countries). In many schools, children are given the chance to draw large pictures, according to their own ideas, with suitable materials. Exhibitions of Child Art are held and well-known art critics attach much importance to writing about children's work. Books containing coloured reproductions of Child Art are available and give other teachers a chance to see what is being done and what experts consider good work. So the methods are spreading to more and more schools and gradually full freedom for self-expression is being given to pupils in all parts of the school. We can see from books published in America and Australia that Child Art is being practised there as well as in Europe.

#### *New art methods in Indian schools*

India is in a different position from Western countries, for she is starting new art methods when others have already shown what can be done. In many places her schools provide fewer facilities for art work than other countries have enjoyed for a long time, because the number of schools is so great and there are so many children in them. Many of the schools, too, are far from centres where new materials and new ideas are available. It is a tremendous problem to train suitable teachers on new lines, or to retrain those who are already at work; and facilities for seeing the work of other schools do not exist outside the towns.

It is not enough, however, to train large numbers of teachers. What we need most is people with an artistic outlook and a sympathetic understanding of children's development. If new art-teaching methods are to be started, most teachers will have to do the best they can where they are. Indian artists are already showing appreciation of children's work. Exhibitions of Child Art are beginning to be held and reproductions of children's work, with comments, are appearing in magazines. It is for class teachers and drawing masters who feel an interest in these methods to begin to experiment with them. Short refresher courses may do a great deal if the right people attend them and they are conducted on the right lines. It ought to be possible to do something by circulating portfolios of children's work, with comments, for display in schools that need inspiration. Teachers and others should cultivate the 'seeing eye'. They

may feel encouraged, when they meet with opposition, to know that the new type of work has already won its way in many countries and is approved by artists in this land. Then, from books, from observation of classes at work and from personal experiment, teachers and inspectors can learn to appreciate what is meritorious. This power of approval and selection is very important. The teacher does not always know how to judge his pupils' work and an intelligent supervisor can help him to see what is good in it. It seems likely that very good Child Art will develop rather quickly in those schools in India that have the right teachers—for they *are* available here and there. But it is difficult to see how the ideas are to be made very general to all the children that need them.

It would be a good thing if all copied work, all work done in imitation of Western pictures, and all work in the style of cheap inartistic book illustrations, were disapproved by the teaching authorities. The public and pupils and teachers should realize that only original work, done with fresh inspiration on the part of the children, is worth having. Such original work will show less finish and less conventional realism than the old style of work and so will often not be appreciated. However, if judges in exhibitions and those who inspect school work and mark examinations have the right standard, progress will be made. Some authorities suppose that children's work will not be good unless the children see plenty of good pictures and are elaborately taught. Experience shows, on the contrary, that artistic ability is entirely innate. Given the materials and the right attitude on the part of the teacher, good work will be done at any age and in any place. Indian children have shown just as much aptitude, if not more, than children in the West.



## THE EFFECT OF THE NEW METHODS

### *Aesthetics and the education of the emotions*

LET us now consider in detail the effect on pupils of the new art teaching. As has been said, it forms one of a group of subjects, with music, dancing and dramatics, that are sometimes termed aesthetics. We may seem to claim a good deal for them in this book but, though it is new to give them so much importance in modern schools, Plato laid great emphasis on them in his plans for education. At the present time, their value is being recognized in other realms of training where they are being taught to people not specially 'artistic'. For example, art is now being taught to patients in tuberculosis sanatoria and is used to help maladjusted children in clinics. Adult education agencies include it in their programmes, it is taught in mental hospitals to help patients recover, and a whole procedure of 'art therapy' is being worked out.

Aesthetic subjects which educate the emotions are rather different from ordinary school subjects. They cannot be prescribed in detail and tested on the same system. They require a different type of discipline. Different considerations govern their success or failure. The co-operation between teacher and class is different. Let us look at their effects.

### *Freedom from inhibition*

Education in the past was authoritarian and produced fear in the pupils and hence inhibitions. This fear may not have been very obvious, but it was a kind of dread of doing the wrong thing, of incurring the teacher's censure. The children were always asking: 'Are we allowed to? Is this the right way? Have we got to do so-and-so?' They usually disliked the art lesson and became depressed. Constant correction led to a feeling of frustration. There was no scope for a pupil's natural delight in making things in his own way and he had no chance to draw what he wanted to draw. He never had to face the problems that arise when one tries to put one's fancies onto paper. Teachers, engrossed in the business of making the

child do what he was told to do, never realized how they were harming him and preventing his proper development and depriving him of the natural joy and peace and satisfaction that come through creative work well done. Our first business, therefore, is to let the child realize that no one is going to scold and correct him for doing things in his own way, that he really is at liberty to do what he wants to do, that his work is not 'wrong' though he may be led to see ways of improving it. It is found that



FIG. 3. Figure posing. Drawn from life by Dunham, aged 17. Pencil and water colour on white paper ; size 8" by 9". In this drawing the pupil is more concerned to make a decorative composition than to be realistic.

young children are very quick to learn this lesson, and their delight in drawing as they like is very obvious and all the greater because now, by letting them do so, we are working with the stream of their natural desires and not against it.

#### *Increase of self-confidence*

So new methods of teaching art, if they are well taken, quickly induce a good deal of self-confidence in the pupils. This happens both with children brought up in an atmosphere of freedom and those who have hitherto been repressed. The natural urge to use the art materials in a free way is strong, and overcomes



acquired habits of obedience. It seems a wonderful thing to a child to be allowed to draw his own pictures and if he is not discouraged he will quickly proceed to do so. He will give long explanations of a few crude shapes on his paper. Older pupils are sometimes more diffident of their powers, but this may be because their efforts have been criticized by teachers or fellow pupils. Once they are free from this criticism, Indian pupils up to the age of twenty can often be induced to draw imaginary pictures or pictures based on something they have seen. They, too, are ready to explain all about them.

We may see pupils, even those with little artistic ability, taking great pains over the work they are doing. Psychologists say that the drawings of little children help them to work out their psychological problems and progress towards integration of personality. This is not the case to the same extent with older pupils, although their intense concentration on and the interesting explanations they give of their work suggest that it sometimes plays a considerable part in the release of emotion. Adolescent girls who have few jewels or expensive clothes love to draw figures clad in the most elegant saris and loaded with jewellery. This helps to compensate them for the hard facts of real life.

### *Creative invention*

To freedom from fear, and faith in their own powers, we may add creative invention. Many drawing teachers have no faith in the inventive powers of their pupils and like to give them something to copy. They will even provide designs for lino-cutting or carving, when their pupils ought to be working out their own ideas according to the possibilities of the material. But children have remarkable powers of making designs. They plan them out and experiment in various ways and we see how much it means to them to get them 'just right'. They develop and repeat and colour designs and find that they have made something that is attractive. It even surprises them to observe the effect of a design when it is carried out over a considerable area. Little children are not content to show merely two or three square inches of a pattern. They like to cover a whole page with it, and most pupils are quite willing to continue their

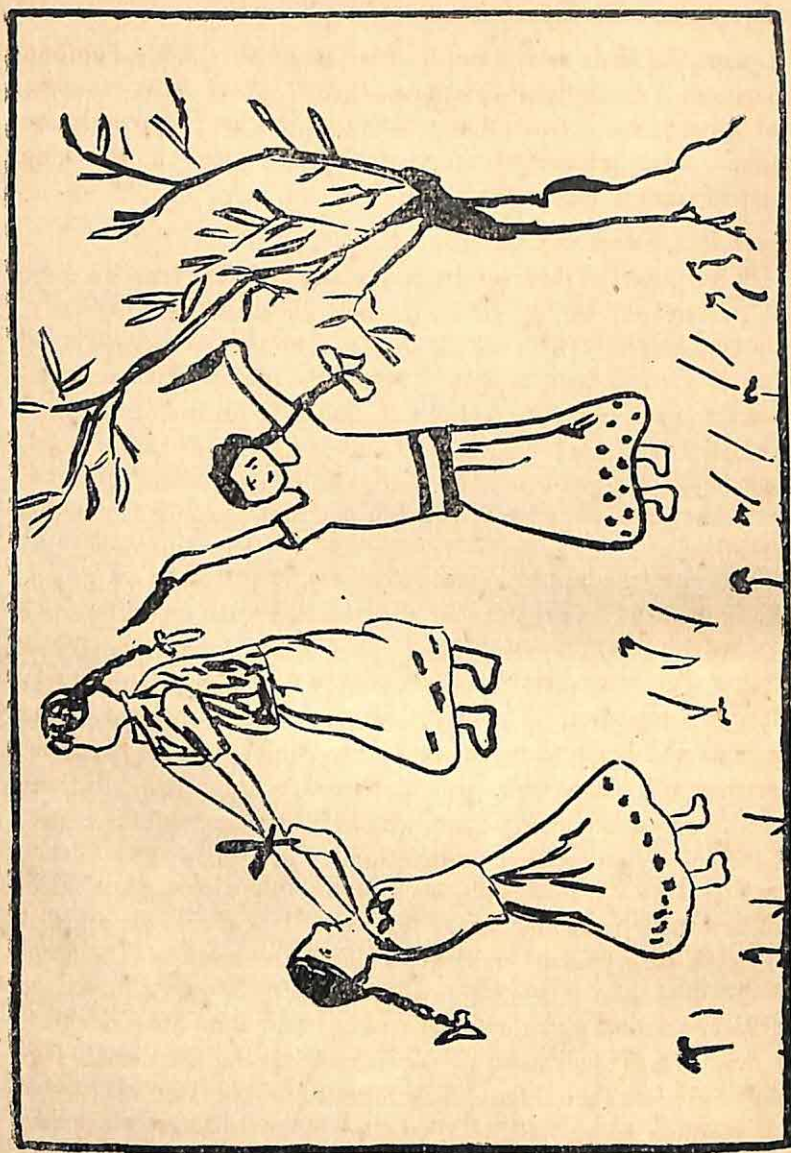


FIG. 4. 'Children doing stick dance.' Painted on white paper with large brush and poster colours; size 17" by 11". By a nursery-school training student, aged 19.



art work in their own time in order to finish it off. Painting designs is a hobby that fascinates them. There must be some real value in an activity that makes such an appeal to so many pupils. This release of creative activity brings a satisfying sense of powers well used.

#### *Social adjustment and initiative*

Some pupils in this country, especially girls, are inclined to be too passive and docile, to sit in their places without initiative, behaving perfectly in an old-fashioned sense but only reproducing what they have been taught. No doubt the emphasis on textbooks and the necessity to learn through the medium of English have been the cause of this, as well as the pressure of examinations. Such pupils are not being educated, not really learning to tackle life. They are often painfully shy and self-conscious in social relationships.

New art methods have a surprising effect on such pupils. The inner urge to get on with the painting leads them to come forward and ask for what they need. They are often found helping themselves to the materials they lack and raiding stocks without permission. They work much faster than under the old methods and begin to invent devices to achieve special purposes, e.g. they will fetch their pens and transfer some paint to them with their brushes if they cannot make a fine line with the brush, or they will remove their bangles and draw round them if they want to represent a wheel. They may arrive with a good paint-box or brush, borrowed for the lesson. Then, if they are allowed to do so, they tend to leave their places and work on the floor. They will sit in a little group round the paint or other materials, or gather round a plant in the garden that they are sketching, or near one of their own number who is posing for them. One helps another; there is mutual criticism and conversation; but if the lesson is going well, all of them work hard, even when they are far removed from the teacher's eye. In this way, shyness and self-consciousness are forgotten. They are eager to show what they have done and pleased to receive constructive criticism.

#### *The effect on certain groups of children*

School art has a value for some pupils like it has for mentally or physically sick people, namely a curative effect.



Adolescents are often moody and irritable. They take offence easily, get involved in quarrels or become depressed by failure. When they have been engaged in a piece of art work that uses all their powers, they are happier and less prone to these failings. The art work satisfies their desire for significance in a legitimate way.

Then, there are pupils who are dull or backward in other lessons, either because of a lack of natural ability or a lack of good teaching earlier on. They find themselves behind in their work, unable to understand, and receiving low marks however much they try. This has a cumulative effect on their development. Failure brings discouragement. 'They lose faith in themselves and give up trying and their work gets worse and worse. They are called naughty and may behave badly out of boredom or defiance. Success in art will have a beneficial effect on such children. They may easily prove to be fairly good at it, for ability in art does not necessarily go with ability in other subjects. The mere fact that there is one lesson in which these children can win the teacher's approval and get good marks has been known to make them more co-operative and hardworking in other subjects.

Then there are the naturally artistic children. Some will be immediately recognized as such; others will only gradually show their ability. These are the pupils who benefit most by art work. The chance to use art materials is in itself a boon to them. They look forward to the art class, finding it the emotional centre of their week. Out of school hours their thoughts will turn to it, pondering problems of craftsmanship, and they, even more than others, will tend to make art their hobby. They may very likely belong to that group of quiet unsociable children who find it hard to fit into the group activities of school life. Our school system gives undue prominence to those who have social gifts or who are good at games. By asking the artistic children to make posters, paint stage scenery, illustrate wall charts, or design concert programmes we can help them, too, to make their contribution to the life of the group. They will value the praise and appreciation that they receive because they do not experience it otherwise. Good art teaching should give them the spur they need to do their best along the lines of



their own ability. People's artistic gifts vary and the teacher must take care to develop to the utmost the peculiar gift of each particular pupil.



## THE TEACHER'S PART

WHAT is to be the teacher's part in the new art teaching? He is no longer to pour instruction into docile recipients. His work must be creative. Like Mother Carey in Kingsley's *Water Babies*, he must 'make things make themselves'. He has to provide the right environment, to inspire the child to do creative work. He must teach him the minimum of technique needed to express himself with different materials. For the artificial discipline imposed under the old system he must try to substitute the natural discipline of the craft itself. Children will be bound by the qualities of the paint, clay and paste which they are handling. Sometimes he will lay down conditions such as the subject of a picture or the purpose of a design. Then he must see that the pupils grasp, and work within, these limitations. But, let us note, these requirements are similar to those met by the craftsman in real life; they are not just arbitrarily imposed for the sake of discipline.

### *Providing the environment*

The teacher's first business is to give opportunities for work. He will have to spend time and energy providing the best equipment possible under the circumstances. In the junior school, this may mean keeping a supply of apparatus and material in a certain place and taking it to the ordinary classroom. In the high school, it should mean the management of a special art room; this may not always be available, but where art crafts are attempted it seems essential to have a room where they can be carried on.

The teacher will take trouble to procure and set out what is needed for his classes, for it is often the presence or absence of materials for some special type of work that makes all the difference to the success of the art in any given term. At present he may have to search here and there in the bazaar to find the various things that are wanted—the brushes, powder paint, gum, string, coloured paper, raw cotton, etc. Very often members of the class will require scissors, paste, paper of various kinds,



clay, cardboard, water, rulers, and other things. It is a real problem at the beginning and end of a lesson to see that everyone in the class has what he needs without waiting too long for it and yet to keep a proper check on the tools and materials which may be costly or scarce. The teacher should appoint monitors who will see to the clearing up, cleaning and putting away of materials. The habit of storing things away safely in their proper place (instead of leaving them about in the room or pushing them untidily into a cupboard) must be learnt by all pupils. All this indicates that a teacher cannot manage to teach craftwork to a large class. Painting is possible with a big number, but most craft work should be for a small class.

*Fitting the subject to the class*

If, under the new system, the teacher spends much less time and energy in imparting technique, he has to give much more attention to seeing that the type of work, the length of lesson and the suggestions made are such as to give the maximum stimulus to creative effort. It is the teacher's business so to choose the subject of the lesson and so to direct it that he creates self-confidence in the class. He must help his pupils to get a result that is successful enough to please them. This means knowing his class and having some idea how a given lesson is likely to turn out.

For instance, tiny children can sometimes be left free to draw what they like, but very often the teacher will suggest a subject for illustration that he knows is at their level. As has been said already, older beginners are not likely to succeed with pictures at first. Pattern work is much easier and gives a pleasing result. So for the first few lessons with them, the teacher takes different types of pattern work, advancing to pictures when he thinks the class will do these fairly freely. He will grade this work in difficulty and vary it. One day he will allow complete freedom in colour; another day he will limit the choice. He may let them use any unit of design they like, or he may put some suggestions on the board which they are free to use or adapt. After some time he may give a lesson in plant drawing or, after several weeks on picture making, return to pattern making of a more advanced kind, alternating between big bold work and small

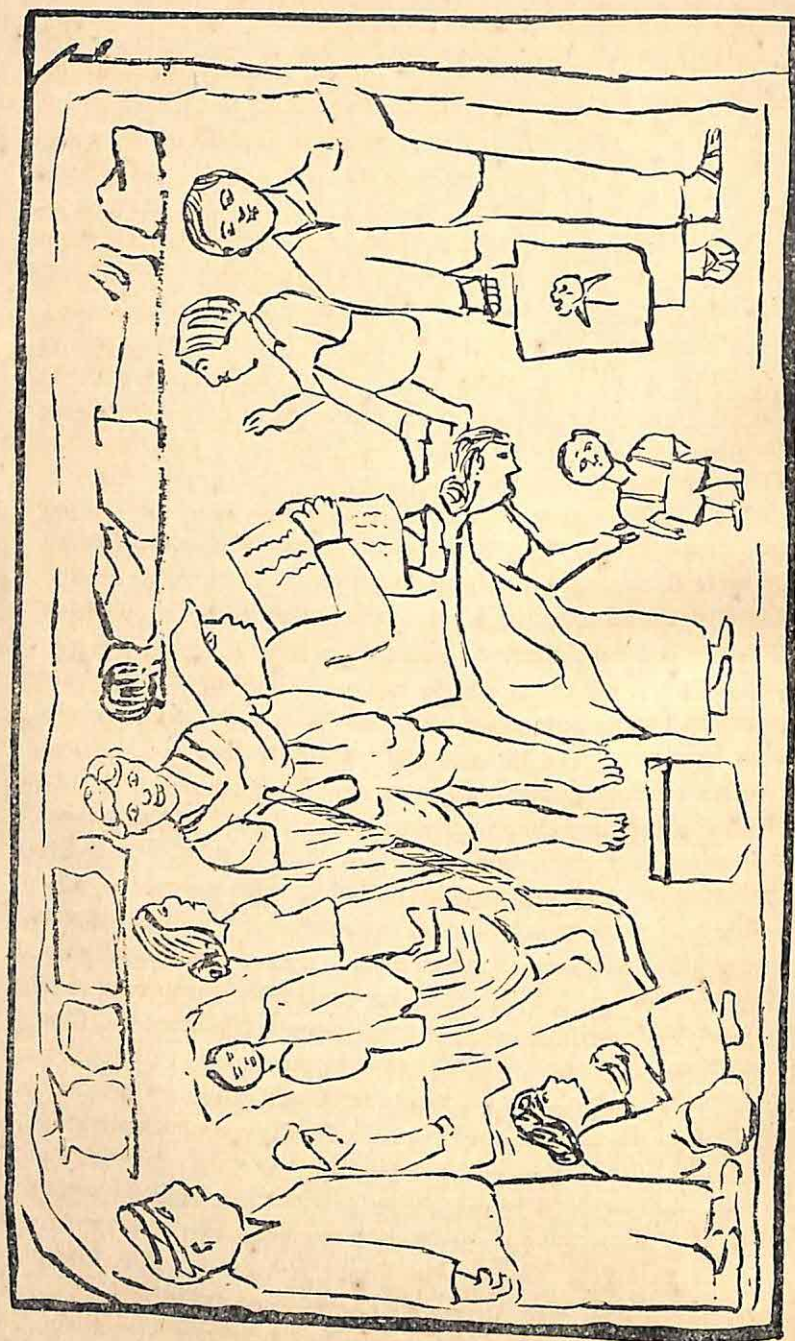


FIG. 5. 'Railway travel' by Bakkiyam, aged 18. Powder colour on white paper; size 12" by 7".



careful work. He will find that if he allows rulers to be used in a junior class, the children will spend the whole lesson ruling out the framework for their patterns and do no drawing, whereas the same operation will take a senior class about fifteen minutes out of a double period and prove a useful exercise in accuracy. Direct brushwork is often preferable to work drawn in pencil and then painted; but if much planning is needed, it seems necessary to allow pencils to be used. He should notice what is happening, however, for little children tend to draw in pencil all the small details that could be done better with a brush. He must give a class long enough at one kind of work to gain some proficiency at it but notice when they are growing stale and then change to something different.

In all this lies the technique of teaching art, and the teacher should learn to use his judgement and think out beforehand what he will do and where the difficulties will lie. He should also estimate how long the work will take, remembering whether he has the class for a double or single period. It is very unsatisfactory if most of the class do not complete what they were expected to finish, though of course there will be some who are quicker or slower than the average. He may choose to spread the work over two lessons and there is no harm in that; the pity is when, through bad management at the start, what might have been finished is left half done.

The teacher may make or mar his art teaching by the way he deals with these practical considerations. He cannot afford to waste time and make frequent mistakes. There are only a certain number of art classes in the school year and there is a golden moment of opportunity for achieving a result with a class that never comes again in exactly that form. So it is fortunate, for example, if he gives just the right first lesson in figure drawing; or, when he first asks his class to use leaves to make a design, he will do well to be sure they choose leaves of a suitable shape. If he can induce them to use Indian letters for their all-over patterns, they may get very interesting results, but if somehow the notion of using English letters spreads round the class, the task is much less easy. Of course he will make some mistakes, but if he is watching to see what happens, he will learn what to avoid next time.



*The use of the syllabus*

If the teacher is to arrange his work in the way described, he must be the master and not the slave of the syllabus. He should, of course, have a syllabus that is made for modern methods. It will probably contain elements that are not what he would have chosen. He should give these a fair trial if other people have found them successful, for they may suit some children. But every teacher must have some freedom to lay the emphasis where he chooses. For one thing, there is the following consideration. Picture making is the most important type of painting in Child Art. If a teacher can make a success of this, he should take it very often. It gives scope for creative imagination, for the record of observation, for composition, for skill in painting and for colour combination; in short, for those factors that are truly art. But it is the hardest form of art work to do well and if the teacher or the class are at the stage when only a few can make good pictures and the rest get no result, then it should not be taken. Easier types of work should be given first. The teacher is the person to judge how long a class should go on at one kind of work and decide when, for instance, they should change from imaginative work to more realistic representation. This will vary from class to class. He must somehow plan the work so that the children are not asked to do what is beyond them but yet have sufficiently difficult work to call forth effort.

*Discipline*

The art teacher should demand obedience to the instructions he gives. If he wants direct brushwork, he must take care that pencils are not used surreptitiously. If he asks for a simple repetition of a unit of design, he will have to check the child who reverses alternate units or begins the second line with a different unit. When he gives measurements for a pattern, they should be followed. He should not ask for what is impossible or very difficult, but he can keep his eye on the places where carelessness usually occurs.

It is advisable to restrict the use of class notebooks to work actually set by the teacher and to let each child have another in which he does whatever he likes out of school. The teacher



must also see that materials are used according to instructions. If work is done when he is not there, he will want to make sure that materials are not lost or wasted. Tools and brushes and colour are expensive and pupils are often careless. Yet it is a very good thing if they can have some freedom of access to these things as they need more practice than can be given in class time. If the teacher anticipates what is likely to happen he can make the right arrangements.

*How much instruction and correction should the teacher give?*

When the teacher gives the class a new type of work, whether it be a brush drawing of a spray of flowers or a border made with dots and strokes, some children may not understand what they have to do. It will help if the teacher makes a small beginning for a few children in different parts of the class and lets the others watch. His strokes, thick or thin, straight or curved, will give the idea better than his words. This is only necessary with new work. Before the class begins a piece of work, the teacher might hold up a notebook or piece of paper, to show which way it should be placed and indicate with his finger where the drawing should come, and how big it should be. Even so, children very often begin their work in one corner or do it much too small. The teacher should look out for this tendency and correct it in the first few minutes before it has gone too far. A very rough sketch on the blackboard may sometimes be made to show what is required, but this should not be definite enough to be copied and should usually be rubbed out immediately.

Many children, once they start a picture, will go on with it for a long time, perhaps half an hour or more. They dislike interruption and we should respect their wishes. At some stage there may come requests for help with one special part. Children sometimes fail to get on because they cannot draw a face well enough to satisfy themselves. The teacher may then give a very small amount of assistance to induce a child to proceed with the drawing in general. Sometimes it will be the hands that give trouble and the teacher can then help by asking someone to pose for a moment in the required position. But such help is only given in response to requests. It is best for the teacher not to tell



a child to alter and correct his work unless he disobeys definite instructions. Failure to carry out instructions will usually have to be corrected, for the teacher cannot achieve the purpose of his lesson if the child does not observe the required conditions.

If the early painting lessons are spent on pattern making, as has been suggested, the teacher has an opportunity to give instruction on the actual use of the brush and paint. He can show how to give a clear pale wash for the background and how to get a stronger, darker colour of the right consistency for other parts of the pattern. He can give this teaching individually while the pattern making is in progress, and the very repetition of an easy unit in a pattern is a good opportunity for a child to learn control of his materials. It is unnecessary to devote whole lessons merely to the technique of painting or of colour combination.

#### *The introduction to picture making*

The teacher of art must always put before the children what he wants them to do. This is the most important moment in the lesson. He has to make them want to do it and also get a clear idea in their minds of what they are going to produce. This is especially true of picture making. He describes some suitable subject that will appeal to them and mentions the different figures and what they are doing, suggesting details of their appearance. As the teacher speaks, a picture should arise in the minds of the children and they should want to draw it. The different children will draw it differently, but the inspiration will be common. If he does it well, the teacher will be conscious of an atmosphere of close attention to his words as all visualize the scene he is describing. He himself will have a picture before his own mind's eye, but it may be quite different from that seen by the children.

This moment of inspiration is a precarious matter. If the teacher takes the same subject with different classes, he may find that sometimes he has succeeded in his attempt and sometimes he has not; or that in one class one aspect of the subject has got across, while another class has taken it quite differently and yet done good work. The group feeling of the class is very important. The teacher with one pupil will not get the same



result. A teacher knows that having had one successful lesson he cannot automatically repeat it but must make a fresh effort of creative imagination before each class. When a class is working well with a teacher, however, it will not be necessary to give such a careful introduction every time. Sometimes the mere suggestion of the right subject will be enough to set the class to work. But it is necessary in some way to arouse their emotional interest.

### *Artistic pupils*

We have already mentioned the artistic children whom we find in every school. They are the most fruitful field for the art teacher's efforts. They will be ready to absorb the suggestions given, to work hard, and to produce good results. They are often quick and finish first.

The teacher will find that he has no need to help these pupils to achieve good results, but they are able to profit by more advanced constructive criticism than he gives to the average. He will expect and receive a much higher standard of work from them and he can deal with considerations that would only confuse the average children. He should give them appreciation and help but not too much praise. They do not need encouragement as the others do. They like to be treated at a more advanced level and made to do their best. It is reasonable sometimes to give them better materials than can be afforded for everyone. Their presence in the class can be a great help to the teacher. Very often the teacher's approach to a subject is so much more adult than that of the pupils that they do not really understand his corrections, they cannot see with his eyes and do not grasp why he wants a thing drawn as he does. This difference between the adult and child vision is one reason why we should not correct the children's work in detail. But the presence in the class of pupils somewhat beyond the average provides an example to the ordinary children of what they might do. They can understand what their companion has done and they are very ready to gather round and admire his work. The teacher will pick out and display on the walls the work of these artistic children and thus teach the rest of the class, who unconsciously absorb what they see.

The teacher will probably find that these children have an advanced appreciation of artistic considerations, while their artistic vocabulary is nil. They can only say 'It is pleasing', 'It is suitable', or 'It does not look right'. Each pupil will develop an individual style, some tending to realism, some to decorative treatment and others showing good composition. The better the pupil, the more original the work.

#### *After the lesson*

The teacher's work is not finished when the lesson is over. He must then mark the work done, for most schools require some kind of grading to be given. Comments such as 'Good', 'Fair', 'Very fair', etc., are more suitable than actual marks, and effort as well as actual merit should be taken into account. In the case of craftwork spread over several lessons, it is important to give some sort of mark, whatever the standard, otherwise a few pupils leave their work unfinished; but if it is to be marked, they will take the trouble to get it done and bring it for appraisal. Children who have been absent or who are very slow also tend to leave their work half-finished.

The teacher should give some thought to the business of displaying good work. He should have a rail or lath round his classroom or a board or screen where good work can be pinned up. Sometimes he should mount it carefully so that it can be sent to exhibitions or shown outside the school. When he does this, it is worth while to choose the mount carefully, to cut the drawing accurately and mount it with due regard to the size of the margin and the sheets that he will show together. He must notice which pieces of work look well near each other, for sometimes the colour of one will destroy the effect of another and the style and size of one will affect our impression of others. No display screen should be too crowded.

Work seen in this way from a distance and in suitable surroundings gives a new and surprisingly good effect.

The teacher may find it of interest to make notes on individual pupils. Gathering together several sheets of work from one child, he can notice the recurring characteristics. The figures will have a certain style, there will be a tendency to put in the same objects again and again. Trees, background, and houses



will be done in one style. A psychologist can interpret these things, but even an ordinary teacher can learn by practice a good deal from them and find this a profitable study.

So we see that under new art methods the work required of the teacher is varied and calls for enthusiasm and much personal initiative.

Part II  
DRAWING AND PAINTING



## THE NEW ART TEACHING IN THE PRIMARY CLASSES

WHEN we come to the practical business of teaching art we are limited by the conditions under which the classes are held. In considering the work in the primary classes we may have in mind the privileged children in kindergartens and well-equipped junior schools or the large classes in big rooms at the bottom of secondary schools. Then there are the children in village primary schools with next to nothing in the way of seating or equipment. Each of these four types of class requires a slightly different organization of art work.

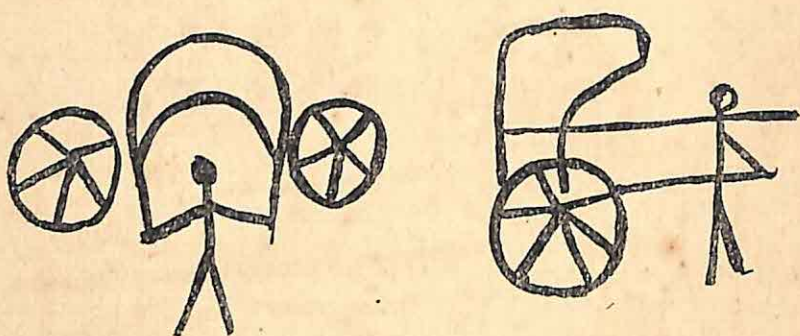
The children in these classes are usually from four to eleven years old and have a typical style of drawing. Those who are very clever or who have had several years of art work under good conditions may pass this 'typical' stage by nine. On the other hand, one sometimes finds children of twelve or thirteen who are still in the primary school. They only have the equipment available for primary-school children and this is probably the reason why their work is on a level with their younger classmates.

On the whole, however, work in the primary classes corresponds to a definite stage in Child Art. This is the great age for Child Art in the West and more remarkable work has been done by pre-adolescent children than by older groups. Because in India there has been little modern teaching or suitable equipment in school art we find that the work in all the primary classes is apt to be on the kindergarten level, as is that of all beginners. But, whether it is crude or advanced, it is certainly worth while to give these children the chance of working on new methods. Even if we have not the best equipment, we can do something with what we have.

### *Methods of teaching children from four to eight*

For the age group from four to eight, the ideal method is to give the children large sheets of paper. These may be spread

on the floor, set up on little easels, pinned to the walls or placed on kindergarten tables. Children then paint on them with large



FIGS. 6 and 6 (a)

Two methods of drawing a rickshaw used by children of 6.

bristle brushes and powder paint. Their work should be **big and bold**. Children like to cover large areas with paint and then paint further objects on top: for instance, ships on top of a blue sea or flowers on top of green grass. They can do this with opaque paint but not with transparent water colour. If, for example, a child tries to paint a yellow sun in a blue sky, it will not show clearly when done in water colour; but if he has opaque paint, he can do this and also make alterations in his picture by painting over what he has already done. Moreover, he can show white objects with white paint on a coloured ground. This is very different from the old method of painting in school, and while it does not produce the beautiful effect of water colours it is more satisfying to the young child. It also provides him with an easier means of getting his effects.

This opaque paint is made with coloured powder, either indigenous or imported, and sold in tins meant for school use. It must be prepared before the lesson by being well mixed with water. It can then be kept in a tin or bottle and a small supply poured out into little saucers or pots for the children to use. The paint should be rather thick. It is a common mistake to make it too thin. If in the course of the lesson it dries up in the dishes, more water can be added. When the lesson is over it is not necessary to waste the paint in the saucers. It can be left to dry up as it is, or poured back into the main supply. For the next



lesson water can be poured into the dry saucers and the paint well mixed again.

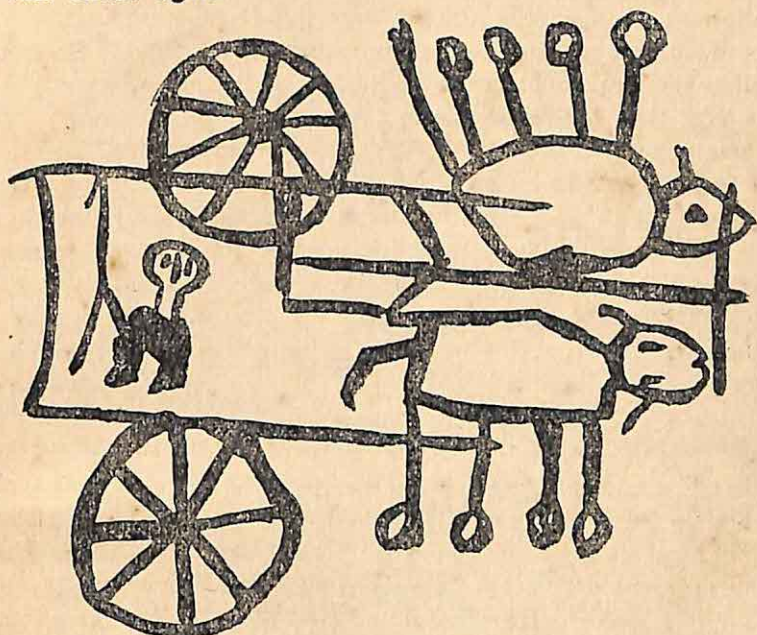


FIG. 7. 'A bullock cart'

A first attempt by a girl of 9. Painted on newspaper ; size 8" x 12".

Children should use one dish at a time and then wash out their brushes and take another colour. At first, one or two colours will suffice, but soon they will like to use a variety. Strong blue, green, yellow, brown, scarlet, as well as black and white, are the best colours for them. It is not practicable to allow children to mix different colours together by this method but when needed the teacher can provide a grey or a brownish skin colour that he has mixed himself. Children like red paint very much, so a greater number of saucers of this should be supplied.

It is a good plan to let the children come and change their paint dishes themselves. This is simple if they are working on the floor and, as we have said, working on the floor is a popular practice even when there are desks. If the class is crowded into desks and cannot easily move about, the teacher may have to change the dishes himself. It is sometimes necessary to dis-

courage the children from changing their dishes too often. Make them use one colour for five minutes or more before allowing them another. They very quickly acquire the habit of washing out the brush before using a new colour. Do not allow them to stretch across each other to dip into paint and be careful that the dishes do not get spilt. It is necessary to maintain a quiet though free discipline in the lesson and anyone who is disobedient and disorderly should be made to stop painting at once. This is quite enough to ensure good behaviour.

When a child has painted over a large area, he will have to wait till the work is dry before he can proceed and he may take his paper out to dry it in the sun. Children will soon discover that wet paint touching wet paint causes one colour to run into another.

### *Children over eight*

Children over eight are more ready to paint on a small scale and they may be allowed to do this sometimes, when they have had some experience of work on a large scale. They will not finish so quickly as the very small children. The tinies will cover several sheets of paper in forty minutes, while children over eight may spend a whole lesson on one sheet. They will also prefer smaller brushes and are able to use water-colour paint-boxes if they are available. These do not provide opaque paint, but they give more colours, allow the pupil to learn to mix paint, and make the organization of the lesson easier.

We must, however, also consider the case of schools where conditions are not as good as those pictured above. There may be hardly any money to spend on materials, they may be unobtainable, or the classes may be 40 or 50 in number and crowded inconveniently into rooms that are too small for them. These conditions make new art methods difficult though not altogether impossible. If paper and paint are scarce, painting can perhaps be taught occasionally but this is better than not teaching it at all. It is also true, though strange, that primary school children seem unperturbed if they are given newspaper or old examination papers to paint on. They are much better off with a big piece of newspaper than with half a page in a small drawing notebook which is often the amount allowed for one



lesson. If the class is very large, painting can be taken with one half of them while the other half works with slates or pencil and paper, the teacher giving the latter merely a little supervision. A teacher who is making a beginning should take about twenty pupils for painting until he has learnt to manage the business. It is also better to begin with children over eight at first. It is impossible to teach painting to great crowds of very small children who have not sufficient space, however desirable it may be that pupils of this age should do it.

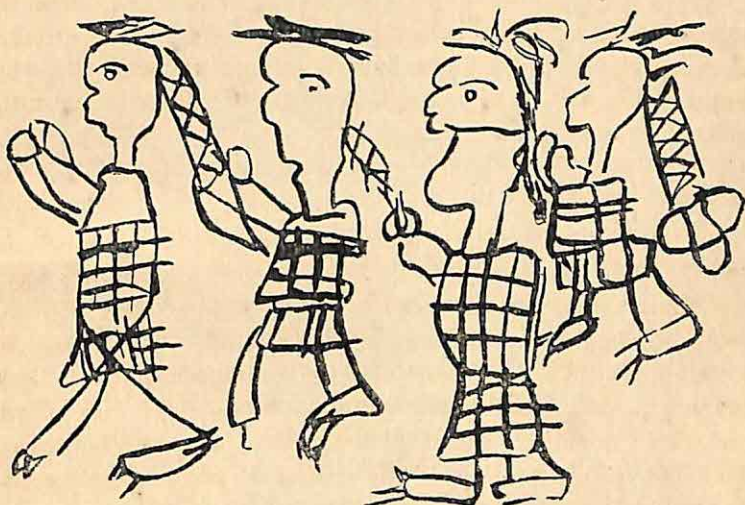


FIG. 8. 'Playing kummi (clap dance)' by child of 7. Pastel on dark paper; size 7" by 10". Note the hands clapping, the feet stamping the beat, and the check frocks which were in fashion when the drawing was done.

Crayons are a possible alternative to paint. (It is generally thought that it is cheaper to use them, but this is not always the case. Paint can be used very cheaply once a start has been made.) Crayon or pastel work is easy to organize. On the other hand, it does not give nearly as much satisfaction to the pupils; the effect is not so strong and bright and children love spreading the wet paint on the paper. However, if painting cannot be managed, much pleasure can be given by keeping a box of broken pastels and letting each child have two or three pieces to use. Their colours and soft surface give a pleasing effect.

Even the total absence of paints, brushes, and pastels, however, need not deprive the children of free expression through art. The caveman devised means of drawing and our children will use whatever materials they can find if only they are allowed and encouraged to do so. The smallest children can be taken out and asked to draw with their fingers in the dust. The walls of some classrooms are painted as blackboards and these can serve as surfaces for drawing on which the children can use white or coloured blackboard chalk. Some classes have small individual blackboards for the younger children and these can well be used for drawing. A concrete floor is also quite suitable. Many classes in elementary schools have nothing but their slates for written work. These too can be used for art and, though not ideal, have proved the means of absorbing and original work. Pencil and paper are popular with children and any old scraps of paper may be used up.

Children should begin work with a soft point like a brush or crayon and represent their object in a mass for, in real life, we see masses—not objects with outlines round them. But, as has been pointed out, conditions may make this impossible and children may have to draw from the beginning with a hard pencil. If, then, they are given crayons and brushes when they are older, they tend to use them as they would a pencil, drawing a fine line round each object before they fill it in. They are even disinclined to fill it in at all and will paint a leaf with a green line round the outside and green lines on it for veins. They need to be taught the possibilities of mass work. It is sometimes quite difficult to break them of the habit of outlining everything.

#### *Characteristics of the work of primary school children*

Children in the lowest class, if given free drawing, will draw a series of isolated objects. These will, sooner or later, include a man, a house, a crow, a ship, a fish, the sun, etc. Their drawings will be all rather alike, each object drawn according to a set formula. In any kindergarten there will be a set of recipes circulating—how to draw a man, how to draw a house or a crow, etc. As soon as one child draws an object, all his neighbours tend to copy him. It is interesting to notice which are the children who originate ideas for the others to copy. We should not forbid



this for it encourages children to use their materials and to gain skill, but something must be done to lead the class on or we may get a repetition of the same set of objects from every child in every lesson. This is, as it were, the raw material, the beginning, of school art work. Presumably it is what happened in primitive

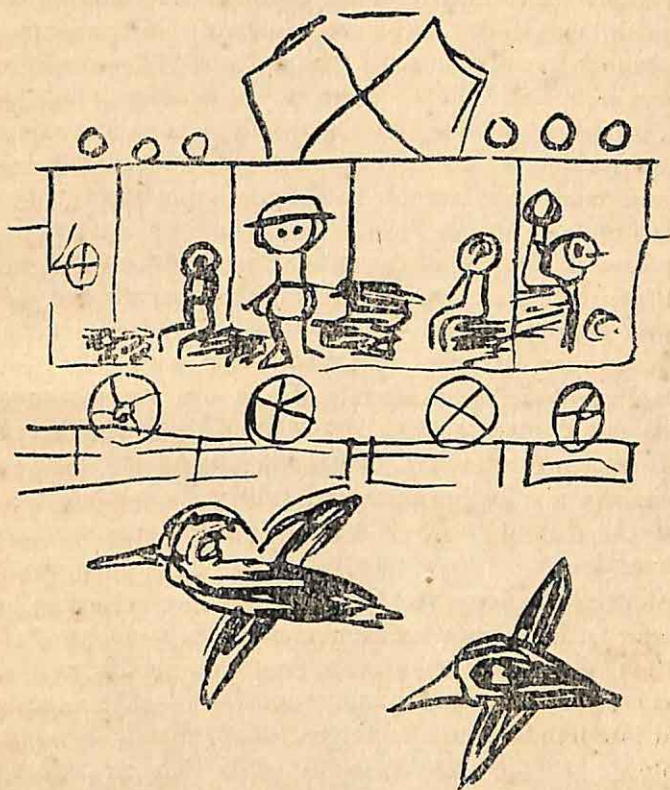


FIG. 9. 'A trip on the suburban train' by child of 7. Pastel on dark paper; size 7" by 10". The erection above the carriage connects with the electric wires. Note crows in foreground.

art. This type of work has been called childish symbolism and the progress from symbolism to realism is one great feature of Child Art. The solitary child at home is in rather a different position. If he is intelligent, he seems to develop some of the symbols for himself and to use them again and again; but he does not, of course, develop the whole stock that the kindergartener learns from his neighbours. Children also pick up some quite

adult formulas which are not primitive at all, but simply easy. These include the patterns for a duck and a cat that grown-ups draw for them. Of course if the teacher draws and tells them to copy the usual mango and tumbler and cup and saucer, these will be added to their stock of symbols or formulas, but this is most emphatically *not* art. Good teachers are sometimes driven to use all kinds of devices to keep children from this pernicious use of stock forms, instead of the original art they ought to be developing.

It is interesting to note that the same formulas for the human figure and for houses seem to arise in all countries spontaneously and that those for the human figure show the same process of development.

The work of the five-year-olds is done very quickly in a few bold strokes. As children develop, they work more slowly, with more original variations. Instead of isolated objects we get integration, all the objects forming part of the picture. If children are sitting at double desks, each pair will do work that is very similar, so it is advisable to change the seating of the children from time to time. Ideas will pass round the class with astonishing rapidity. The more inspiring the teacher, and the more experienced the children, the less will these fashions be evident.

Merit at this stage should not be reckoned according to the accuracy of the objects drawn nor usually according to the composition of the picture. The imaginativeness and vigour of the ideas expressed are what should count. We should note when a child introduces an original theme. If the class is drawing men climbing for coconuts, praise the child who puts in the old woman at the bottom chopping them open and giving them to people to drink. If they are drawing children playing games, praise the one who has a whole group playing football and not merely a series of isolated children with balls. If it is a family scene, one clever child may show all the figures interrelated, the sister rocking the baby's cradle and the son showing his book to the father. If they do a large figure, some will put very interesting designs on the clothes.

The general subject of children's pictures is taken up in the next chapter.



## CHILDREN'S PICTURES

CHILDREN'S pictures are the most typical product of Child Art and the most surprising. The usual representation of scenes in children's work seems to follow the same laws as governed ancient Mogul art and medieval book illustrations. The sky is a narrow strip at the top of the picture and there is a blank space between it and the ground. The sun is usually put in and sometimes the moon and stars as well. Mountains are huge and jagged and either black or green. The greyish-blue and soft outlines of distant hills have no place in children's work. Rivers are blue and run like ribbons right across the picture or down from the mountains. Lakes bulge like balloons across half the background. Temples on mountains are gigantic in size, while huts in the foreground may be the size of dog-kennels. Trees in the foreground may only be the size of plants, yet grow to mighty proportions on the tops of distant hills. A wood will show the trees growing one above another. As in Mogul pictures, roads will wind uphill to houses at the top of the picture and the dogs and figures in a hunting scene may be arranged all over the picture wherever there is a convenient space. Different incidents in a story will be shown in the same picture as was quite common in Mogul and Rajput work and even in fourteenth-century Italian pictures. When children illustrate a game or sports scene, the playing field is shown flat like a plan, just as ancient pictures of feasts showed a full view of the top of a table with all the eatables arranged upon it. Houses have transparent walls so that we can see the folk indoors and sometimes we see three walls of a house. This too is found in Mogul pictures. When children draw a crowd of people, they may draw them standing one above another, or standing with feet together and heads radiating out or with heads together and feet radiating out. The one thing they are unlikely to do is to draw the figures partly in front of each other and the crowd confined to a small area of the picture.

Objects in a picture will often keep their childish symbolic form wherever they are placed. There are conventions for a dog (side view), for ducks, for a well, a plant in a pot, a lotus. These

are brought in again and again. Houses follow a standard pattern as do flowers and trees and shrines. Different children



FIG. 10. 'Festival in honour of Krishna.' Drawn by girl of 10 on slate with slate pencil; size 8" by 9". The familiar pose of Krishna is attempted within a childish convention and conventional figures are used for the father and mother. Their hands are brought together to show worship. Note the moustache and tuft on the head that distinguish the man and the long plait of the woman. Among the offerings in the foreground, some of the plates are shown by a full circle and others drawn as though in section. The objects to right and left at the back are lamps.

or different classes may evolve their own patterns for some of these, but once adopted they will be repeated constantly. The teacher learns to look eagerly to see if any part of the picture shows original work.

We have said that the child's disregard for photographic



realism means that objects will be drawn all over the page. Sometimes they are a mere collection of individual drawings with no connexion between them. More advanced drawings will show co-ordination and sometimes a very good sense of composition. One curious effect occurs. If children draw a road, the houses or trees on either side will be at right angles to it, so that some are drawn upside down. This may also happen with figures. Some children will turn their paper round to draw parts of their pictures and we have to turn it round to understand it. Yet they often succeed in expressing their ideas very forcibly. We can see this in the work of quite young children, if we know how to understand it.

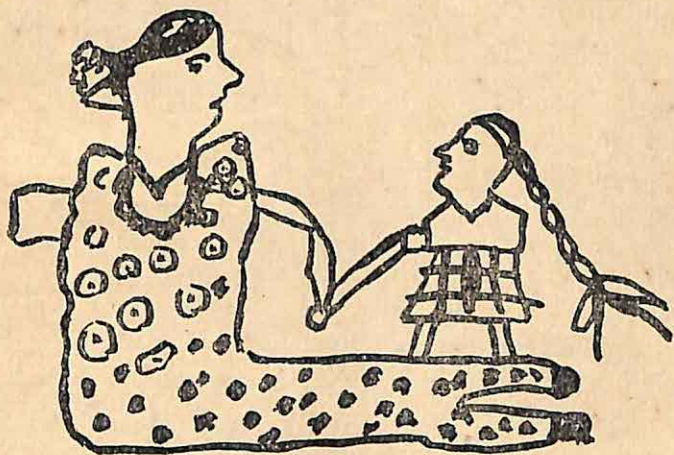


FIG. 11. 'Mother and daughter' by girl of 12, a beginner. Done with a large brush and four coloured dyes on used newspaper; size 12" by 14".

We see it again in the work of the older ones. The objects in their pictures are drawn with rather more realism, but they include only what adds to the meaning of the drawing and leave out everything else. The result is much more striking than if they had tried to be life-like. Often the importance of an item determines its size. A king will be large and an unimportant figure small.

It is a good idea sometimes to ask children to draw a single figure, such as a dancer, a beggar, a clown or a bride. They may or may not be asked to add a background and subsidiary

details. This method stimulates the imagination and often produces a work of good composition. Another idea is for the teacher to describe two or three figures in a given situation.

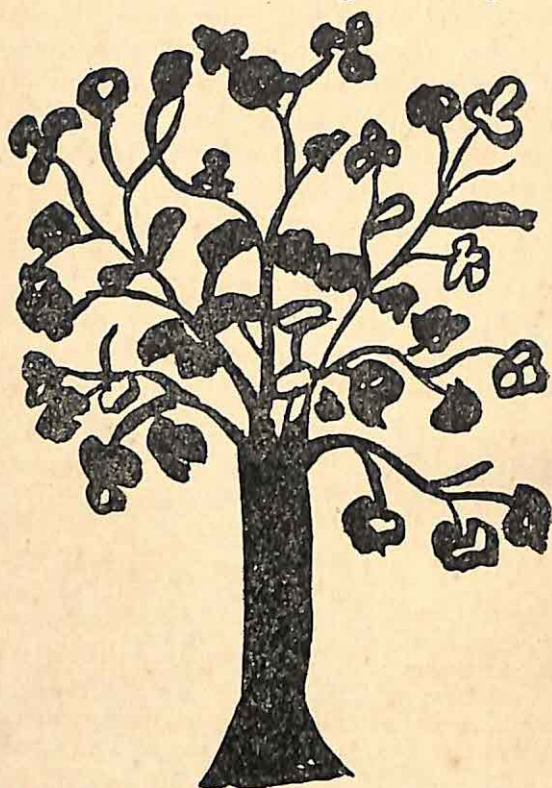


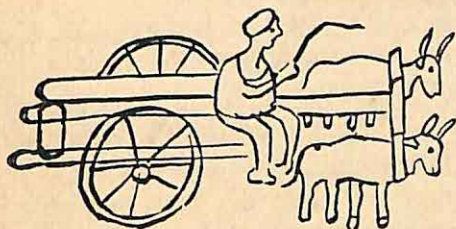
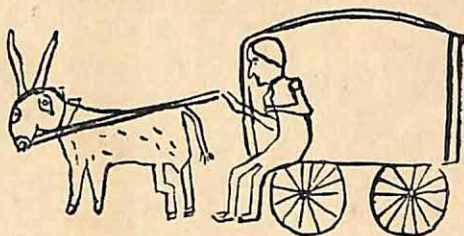
FIG. 12. 'A tree' by girl of 12, a beginner. Done direct with large brush on used newspaper in three coloured dyes ; size 8" by 13".

He may suggest mother buying a balloon for her little girl whom she has taken to the bazaar, or two sisters out shopping giving alms to a beggar. This produces a picture with a single centre of interest and is often a success. At other times a more general subject is given but one that interests the class. Many children will produce a picture that is full of interesting incident and characteristic detail. It may however lack unity and contain several centres of interest, each of which might have made a picture by itself. We may get a scene in a railway carriage such as Fig. 5, or school games as in Fig. 26. 'The school sports' is a popular subject. If we ask for a drawing of children



going to school, we shall get a group waiting for a bus, several children in the road carrying their books, the teacher in a rickshaw, and various dogs and cyclists, etc. If we set 'A bazaar' as the subject, the children will enjoy themselves drawing the piles of fruit and vegetables, a man selling children's clothes, a lady in a fine sari and a servant with a plain sari and no blouse. Boys draw pictures of ships, motors, trains and aeroplanes. They spend a good deal of time repeating known formulas for each of these, but there is usually some point that is original. Buses and lorries, cycles and bandies are very popular, boys drawing the mechanical parts with care, girls putting in the bundles on the top of the bus. Hindu festivals also elicit interesting results, such as a picture of the temple car going along the road or the lamps and fireworks of Deepavali or of worship in the home with trays of offerings before a shrine (Fig. 10).

FIGS. 13 and 13(a). 'Bullock cart' by Kalyani, aged 10, and by Philip, aged 11.



These drawings, each 4" x 5", were made in pencil on white paper and then painted. Kalyani's is of a much more elementary type than Philip's, which is advanced for a child in the primary school. Kalyani shows both eyes in a side view of the bullock and both wheels, side by side, and her figure is seen through the side of the cart. Philip has almost given a perspective view of the cart. He can draw one object behind another without lines crossing each other, and his wheels show an advanced conception. Both figures are rather advanced as childish figures go, showing real observation of the pose. Both drawings were made in the same lesson.

In all these the children put in items that the teacher would never have thought of. There may be a crow waiting

to swoop down on some eatables or two dogs quarrelling over a bone. In a family scene, the boys will be dressed in modern style, in shorts, while the more old-fashioned father wears a *vaishti*. In Madras, little girls will be shown in frocks with short hair, while their older sisters wear saris.

Children see the world with a child-like vision. Sights that are matters of indifference to adults are full of wonder for children and stimulate them to artistic effort. That is why their pictures are so refreshing. We should encourage them to draw them while the sense of wonder holds. It does not matter if their powers of expression are limited and the results crude. It is the presence of genuine emotion that makes the work artistic.

### *Subjects for pictures*

It is important to catch the imagination of the children by suggesting suitable subjects for their pictures. A number are suggested here, some of which are mentioned elsewhere in the text but are repeated here for convenience. First comes a list of single objects or single figures or pairs of figures. Some of these are more suitable in junior classes than a wider subject.

#### 1

Bus, bandy, jutka, cycle, tram, motor car, lorry, rickshaw, handcart, train, postman, policeman, beggar, dhobi, ploughman, gardener, teacher, sanyasi, soldier, mother, dancer, clown, my friend, bride, wedding guest, woman cooking, boy scout, girl guide, sweet seller, coffee seller, balloon seller, tiffin porter, snake charmer, gypsy, 'tiger man', man going to office.

Mother and child, king and queen (imaginary), bridal pair, father and son, boxers, father and mother.

#### 2

Teachers sometimes find that it is helpful to describe a definite scene including a limited number of figures. The following subjects have been given with success.

A blind beggar at the door.

Your mother takes you to the bazaar and buys you a balloon.

Father takes his food, mother serves the rice and you fetch a tumbler of water.

A man climbs for coconuts and his wife and daughter watch him.



The fisherman brings his fish to land and a woman comes and buys some.

You and your sister go out shopping and on the way you give alms to a beggar.

A tennikoit match. Two players are in saris and two in games costumes.

Worshipping the tulsi plant.

## 3

The following subjects have been set successfully. They should be given with suitable introductions and at the season when they are likely to appeal to the class concerned.

Deepavali or any festival (a) out of doors; (b) in the home.

School athletic sports. Any major game: cricket, netball, hockey, etc.

Scout or guide activities as suggested.

School excursion. On the way to school.

Shopping in the bazaar. Street scene.

The school play. Visit to an exhibition.

School nature walk. Indian folk-dance (*kummi*, etc.).

The family at home. Family group.

A feast in the home. House work.

Our village. Work in the garden.

Going home for the holidays. What I did in the holidays.

Dhobis at work. Morning work in the village.

The ration shop. A pikotah.

Procession with temple car. Bathing in a tank.

A wedding. Wedding procession.

In a railway train. At the circus.

Monsoon. Mischievous monkeys.

What the crow did. An accident.

Picking mangoes. A picnic.

An electric train. School garden work.

Village huts. Woman cooking.

Inter-school sports. Planting out paddy.

Our toys. Evening on the beach.

Visit to the temple. Garden with flowering trees.

At the well. At the tap.

Teacher and class. Visit to Mahabalipuram, etc.

Killing a snake. Trying to catch a thief.

At times the teacher may ask for an illustration of a story the children know, such as a historical or religious story ; or he may ask them to illustrate a poem. He could ask for an illustration of a proverb or of two or three lines from the *Tirukkural* or any other well-known book.

It is possible to set fantastic subjects such as a landscape under the sea, a scene in fairyland, a scene in a dream ; these may help children to escape from conventional colouring for their pictures.



## CHILDREN'S FIGURE DRAWING

CHILDREN'S figure drawing is a most interesting affair; but, to appreciate it, we must abandon all thoughts of what is correct and consider the matter as a psychological study in child development and the self-expression of primitive minds.

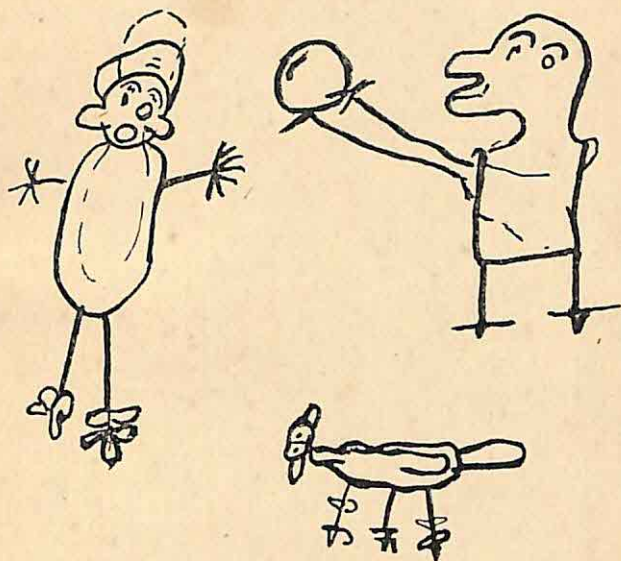


FIG. 14. 'My sister's doll with a bonnet, my brother with a tender coconut, a dog with three legs' by boy of 7. Pencil on white paper; size 7" by 5". The doll shows a typical childish convention for figures, full face. The boy with the coconut shows a more advanced convention.

The child of four or five will volunteer to draw mother or a man and the result will probably be a round head with arms and legs attached. This is enough to satisfy the child at first. Next we shall get a body and a head with single lines representing arms and legs. There will usually be five toes on each foot and five fingers on each hand. Again the child is quite satisfied. His drawing is to him an adequate statement of what he has to say about a figure. A little later, two strokes will be used for the arms and the legs, some details will be added—such as a hair

bun, features, two lines to represent the sari going over the shoulder—but the principle is the same. The child has a formula which to him is enough to represent a figure. He adds one or two special points that are characteristic of the particular person he is drawing and so he tells his story. Everything is drawn out of his head; there is no model. He makes no attempt to give a likeness; his symbol is enough for all heads, all hands, all eyes and mouths, and is repeated again and again in various combinations. Even when his drawings become much more elaborate, he still puts down what he knows is there, not what he sees. When he wants to represent a family, he will draw some figures large and some small, with a few details to distinguish them, but actually they are all reproductions of the same formula.

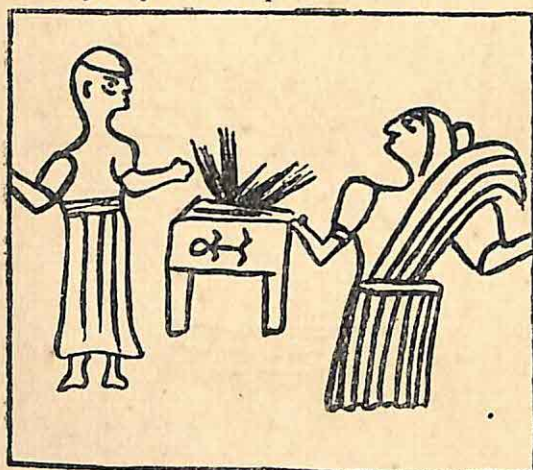


FIG. 15. 'Nativity scene' by Motilal, aged 8. Drawn on a slate; size 4" by 5". Except for the sari, the figures might be primitive drawings from any country or time.

As children advance in ability, their figures express various actions; but whereas, in real life, the pose of the whole figure is affected by the action, the child keeps to his usual symbol for most of the figure and merely shows the action in arms or legs. Fig. 20 shows a very convincing picture of drinking milk but the whole action is indicated merely by the arms and the tilt of the head. It may be that the figure is bent stiffly to sit on a chair, or cut off half way to indicate that it is sitting on the ground. Father may have his tools, mother may be holding a child by the hand, a small upright figure may be perched on the saddle of what is meant for a cycle. Children doing a circular clap-dance will be facing in all four directions of the compass



and almost standing on their heads as they go round the circle. Such is the line of development in children's drawings.

But let us return to the work of the very small child. At first all figures are full-face. At about six, many children adopt a different formula. The body is front view; the head, which is a sort of elongation of the trunk, is side view. Nose and mouth are shown, for which there are various popular formulas. Feet are side view. The eye is always front view and often both eyes are drawn in a side face or the paper is turned over and one eye put in on the other side. Fig. 14 shows both types drawn on the same sheet by a boy of seven.



FIGS. 16 and 16 (a). 'My Mother'. Two drawings by girls of 9 with crayons on white paper; each 4" by 5". Note the sari, the hair bun with flowers, the bangles and the anklets. The sari presents a problem at this age. 16 is drawn full face except for the feet; 16 (a) has head and feet side view.

Such figures are common to the art of the child and of primitive man and there are other points which are characteristic of both. One is the desire to draw every object complete. They will neither draw it halfway off the paper, nor partly hidden by something else. The lower limbs, for instance, may be drawn very small indeed, simply in order that they shall not be left out. It just would not occur to a child to do a three-quarter-length portrait. This same compulsion to draw what they know is

there, rather than what they see, often leads them to indulge in what has been called 'X-ray drawing'. They show the lines of a figure through the clothes, people seen through the side of a cart, or a bucket seen through the sides of the well (as in Fig. 2). Similarly, they may show the two wheels of a bullock-cart side by side and the four legs of an elephant in a row below its body. These conventions seem to have existed in every country. We find them in ancient Egyptian paintings, in the drawings of the bushmen of Australia, and in cave men's drawings from the stone age, in the work of American Indians as well as in those of modern English kindergarten children. It is astonishing how similar the drawings of the children are, whether Eastern or Western, to those we find in our records of ancient peoples.

As children reach the age of nine or ten, there is a good deal of difference in their development. Some will still draw figures according to a very primitive formula, but will pay much attention to clothes and accompanying articles. In a woman, the end of the sari is often drawn sticking straight up in the air or taking a curve over nothing [Figs. 16 and 16 (a)]. Bangles and anklets are usually put in and much ornamentation drawn on skirts and blouses. There is a development of co-ordination among the figures in a picture at this age even while the childish formula is retained for the individual figures. Some children, on the other hand, will put in life-like details drawn from observation, such as the woman's arms clasping the pot on her head or the man's hands driving a car. These are drawn realistically, though added on to a figure that is otherwise symbolic.



FIG. 17. 'A bride' by girl aged 8. Drawn direct with brush in powder paint on used buff paper; size 7" by 3". Note the bouquet and garland.

By the time the children are in the middle school, at the age



of eleven or twelve, the better half of the class will have made some advance towards a realistic representation of the figure.



FIG. 18. 'Playing kummi' by girl of 10. Pencil on white paper ; size 7" by 7". The convention is still entirely childish but the whole conception has grown more elaborate and each movement of the dance is shown by a different pair of figures. Note the size of the hands compared with that of the feet ; also the varied decorations on the clothes.

We may expect to find head, neck, trunk and limbs drawn with a certain regard to proportion, though the lower half of the body is often still too short and the hands and feet too small. The figures are still stiff and children have difficulty in representing them in more than two or three set poses. There is no idea of anatomical correctness and very little idea of the structure of the human frame with its bony skeleton, its balance of weight, its volume and tensions. In many cases, what has been drawn looks like a suit of clothes with limbs attached. Most pupils, at this age, have evolved their own formula for a figure, differing a little from other people's, that appears again and again in their work. Some figures will still be drawn front view, but a few of these will have the face done in profile. Eyes will always be

boat-shaped, a symbol that is used by some children as long as they are at school. Figures that are not full view or back view are exactly side view. What appear as curious bumps on the chest and back are really representations of the shoulders, drawn front view under a side view head.

We have already noted that the new method of art teaching tells us not to try to correct these drawings of figures according to adult standards. It is necessary perhaps to repeat this, for

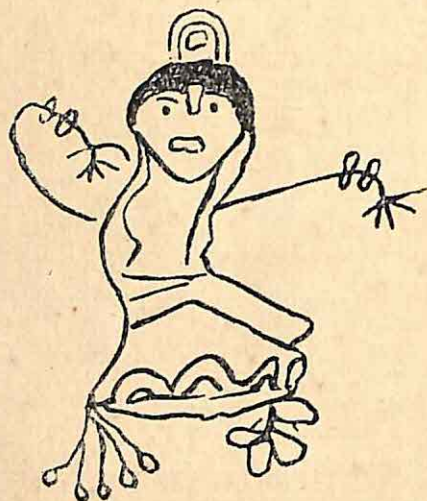


FIG. 19. 'Dancer' by Usha, aged 7. A tiny drawing in pencil and paint. Note the feet, the bangles on the arms, and the pose of the arms. The nose is drawn between the eyes where it 'feels' to be.

teachers who are prepared to leave small children free to express themselves may be inclined to correct the lesser 'mistakes' of middle-school pupils. But they, too, are only drawing what is natural to their stage of development and their vision is still very different from that of an adult. Now and again they may become dissatisfied with their ability to represent some object sufficiently realistically and will ask for help. When they ask, it means that they are ready for

help; but, even so, the teacher must be careful to give only the minimum necessary. Another pupil can show the difficult point in a pose, or the teacher may draw that particular portion for them. They will then, very likely, exclaim with satisfaction that this is just what they wanted and now it looks right. It is by help like this that we can assist them to progress; at this point the teacher's vision meets that of the pupil. But too much help and correction will do more harm than good. Particularly we must not give it until it is asked for or until we see that the pupil is at an end of his own desire to express himself. When he first begins he has certain ideas that may be quite different from those the teacher would have thought of. The arrange-



ment of the hands, for instance, may seem of immense importance and worth much effort to get right while the feet are left in a very childish style. The hair and the long plait loom large in girls' drawings while boys may be interested in a boxing pose.

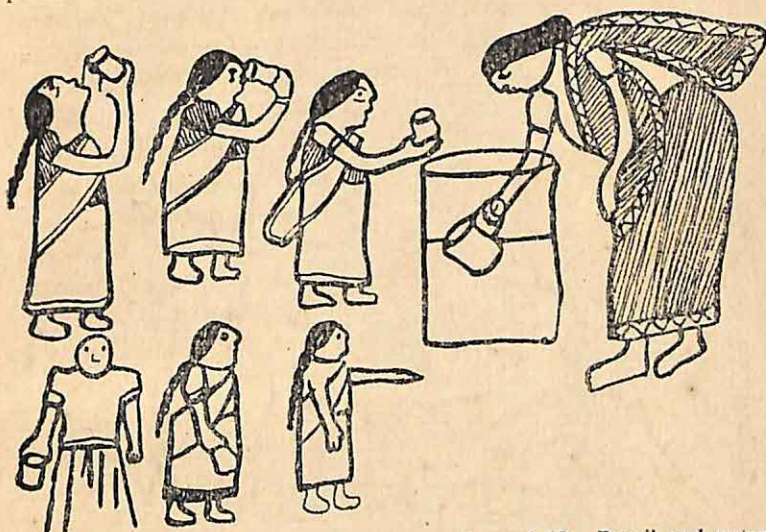


FIG. 20. 'Drinking free milk' by Jeyamoni, aged 19. Pencil and water colour on white paper; size 9" by 13". As in Fig. 2, she uses a childish convention rather effectively. The vessel containing milk is drawn as though it were transparent, like the wall of the well in Fig. 2.

Remember, also, that the average child finds it difficult to draw the human figure to his satisfaction. He does the best he can by adapting the recognized formulas for his purpose. If he is working up to the limit of his creative ability, he does not want the teacher to improve upon some part of his drawing that satisfies him. The teacher can doubtless make the pupil improve the figure anatomically, but this means that the child is expressing the teacher's—not his own—ideas. The work then gives him more worry than satisfaction. What we want from our pupils is not correct drawings but work in which they carry out their own ideas and which gives them a sense of fulfilment rather than frustration.

Furthermore, good pupils will advance a long way in drawing figures that express action or rhythm of motion or that have some

other merit, such as a decorative appearance or an expressive attitude in the composition. No amount of correction on the



FIG. 21. 'Student teaching nature study' by Amirtham, aged 19. Pencil on white paper; size 8" by 11". There is a unity of conception in this picture. Everyone is concentrating on the bird whose importance is suggested by its size.

part of the teacher could have achieved this. He might have got a dead level of realistic drawing but he could not have secured the element of inspiration that was what made the pupils do the work. It is worth having a drawing with some mistakes in it for the sake of its general merit. The poor pupil, on the other hand, will not really do good work, however much the teacher corrects, so he might as well be left to do what he can on his own. The variation in ability in a class is tremendous, and can be seen by comparing Figs. 1, 3, 5, 25 and 26 with Figs. 2 and 20 which were all done by girls in the same class.

Quite often, with girls, the interest is not in the figure at all as a figure, but merely as a model on which to show off clothes.



In the portrayal of the clothes, girls will show artistic ability of a decorative type. We must realize this and appreciate this aspect

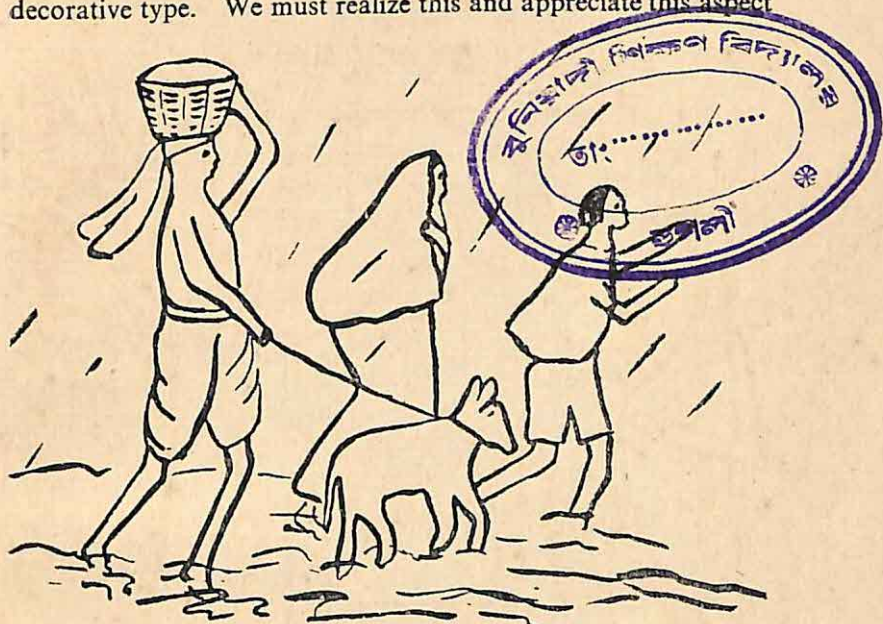


FIG. 22. 'Monsoon' by Glory, aged 18. This drawing is 6" by 7", part of a larger picture done in pencil and powder paint on buff paper. The figures look as though they are really making their way through a flood.

of the matter. A sari drawn by a sari-wearer has something individual and vital about it that is not to be found in the drawings in a textbook or fashion plate. It will, of course, be worn correctly according to the exact fashion at that time and place and will be of the type the pupil would like to have. Blouses too may show the latest style. Spots on a blouse and lines or delicate patterns on a sari border will be done with attention. Of course the pupil has little knowledge of the actual appearance of folds of material which she represents by straight lines going diagonally across the breast or vertically down the skirt. The end of the sari going over the shoulder will look awkward or even impossible in its arrangement, sticking out stiffly with its border on either side. Rajput drawings show just the same treatment of the sari and they also show a preference for faces in profile. As noted before, some of the pictures produced in present-day schools are distinctly reminiscent of Mogul and Rajput drawings,

though the pupils may never have seen any. Great attention is paid to the treatment of jewellery. Besides bangles, anklets and ear-rings, we have necklaces and fancy belts, head ornaments and armlets. Pupils will sometimes resort to pen and ink to produce fine work and they love to use white paint to add jewellery on top of work already painted. As a subject, 'A bride' gives scope for much elaboration and much energy is usually bestowed on the garland and bouquet as well as on clothes and jewels.

### *Progress in figure drawing*

We must look out for the individuals or group who have ceased to invent and who tend to repeat former achievements. We can help them by the type of subject we set, seeing that the pupils do not do just the same thing over and over again but in some way are forced to tackle something new. We may set as a subject one figure only, or two related figures such as 'Mother and child', 'Shooting a goal at netball', 'Pounding rice', 'Cooking', 'Carrying a pot on the head'. A particularly popular subject with girls is a dance pose.

Whatever the subject, the pupils are faced with difficulties. One sees them trying to take the pose themselves, feeling how the body should go. It is a good plan to let one member of the class take the required attitude for a minute, showing the position of the hand as it holds the rice pounder or balances the netball (Fig. 26). In a dance pose we get much more rhythm and motion than in ordinary figure drawing. Arms are usually skilfully done and hands well attempted. Pupils will rub these out again and again till the important gesture belonging to the dance is achieved. This happens when the girl is thinking of herself as the figure and feeling the movement in her own body (Figs. 24, 25 and 26), not just picturing it before her eyes.

The different stages in figure drawing are illustrated in the following lesson taken with girls over fifteen. The subject was 'At the well'. Figures coming and going, carrying pots on their heads were drawn easily in a childish way. Great attention was paid to the act of drawing water which was altered several times before most pupils were satisfied with their work. The final result showed care and observation and also the memory



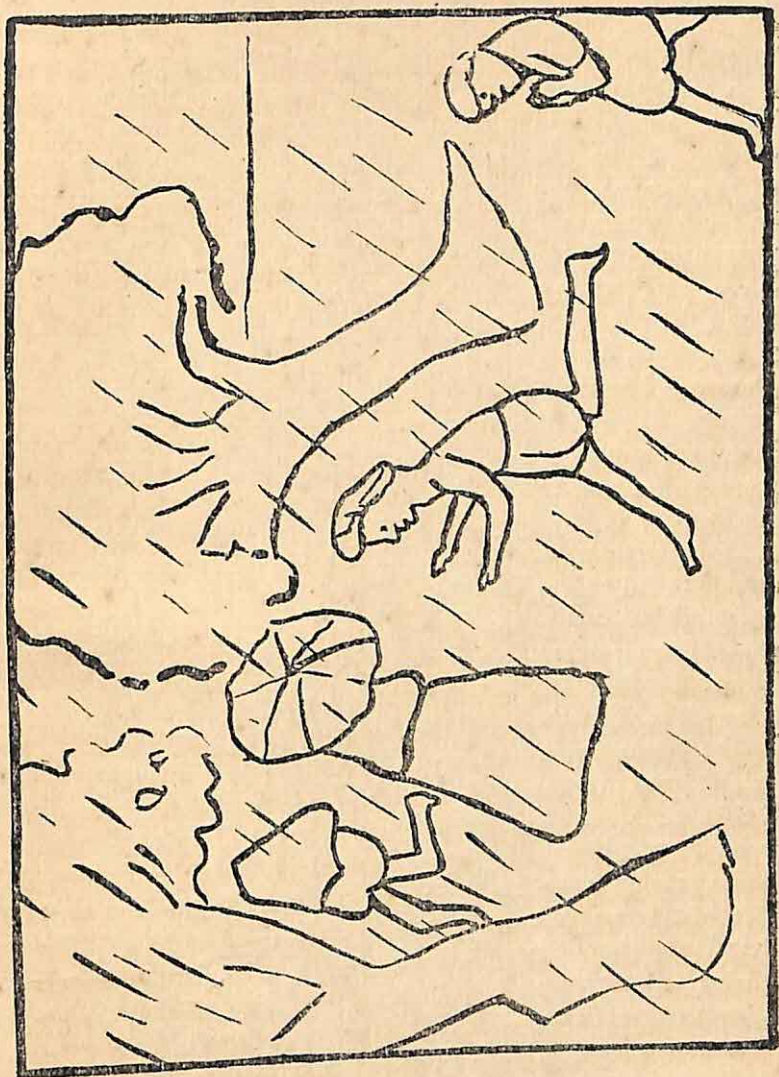


FIG. 23. 'Monsoon'  
by Chandra, aged  
21. Done with  
pencil and powder  
paint on buff paper;  
size 17" x 11".

of what it *felt like* to draw water. Two or three pupils went out to a nearby well and posed for each other, one pretending to be pouring water over the head of a child, another stooping to wash clothes. These directly observed figures were realistically drawn. Here we have symbolism, memory and direct observation at work in the same lesson, the pupils using the method that they felt they needed. The teacher made no attempt to impose her ideas, yet every pupil had exerted effort in drawing the scene. None had merely repeated known formulas or copied someone else's work.

Another time the teacher tried posing a pupil before the class for them to draw. The figure sat on a table, side view to the class, clasping her hands round her knees. Although a model was before them, many members of the class paid hardly any attention to her. Arms were drawn like sticks, feet were very tiny, and the figure was



FIG. 24. 'Figure leaning against a tree' by Dunham, aged 17. This drawing is 4" x 6", part of a larger picture in pencil and powder paint on buff paper.

drawn completely in profile even by pupils who could see three-quarters of the model's face, but the eyes of course were drawn front view. These pupils were clearly not ready to draw from life, but were still at the stage of using the stock formulas for arms, head and so on. On the other hand, a small proportion of the class drew the figure very carefully, the line of the hair, the position of the hands, and the folds of



the sari all being shown. Some even achieved a three-quarter view of the face, or a head largely turned away, drawing the line of the cheek as they actually saw it.

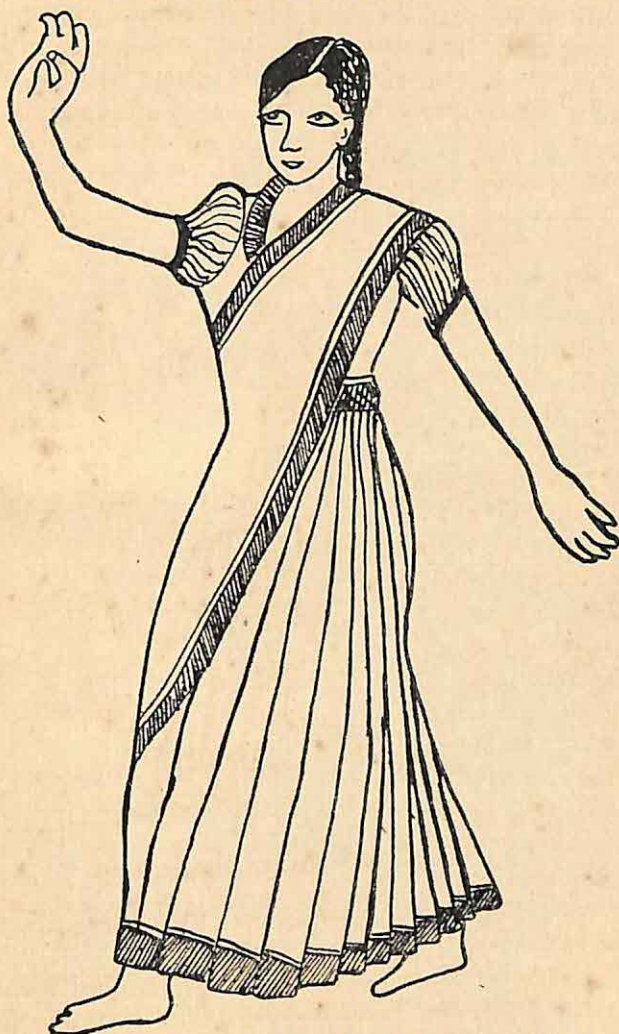


FIG. 25. 'Figure in dance pose' by Manoraham, aged 17. Pencil and paint on white paper ; size 10" x 11".

These were the girls who were passing to the realistic stage of drawing. Only a few pupils in a school will reach this stage and much depends on temperament. It may sometimes be

reached by quite young children, but it is commoner at adolescence. Teachers should not attempt to force others to do what these do, nor is their work necessarily the best. It is good work along one of several possible lines. Though these young artists have no knowledge of anatomy and may draw parts of the figure incorrectly, their work often shows some feeling for the

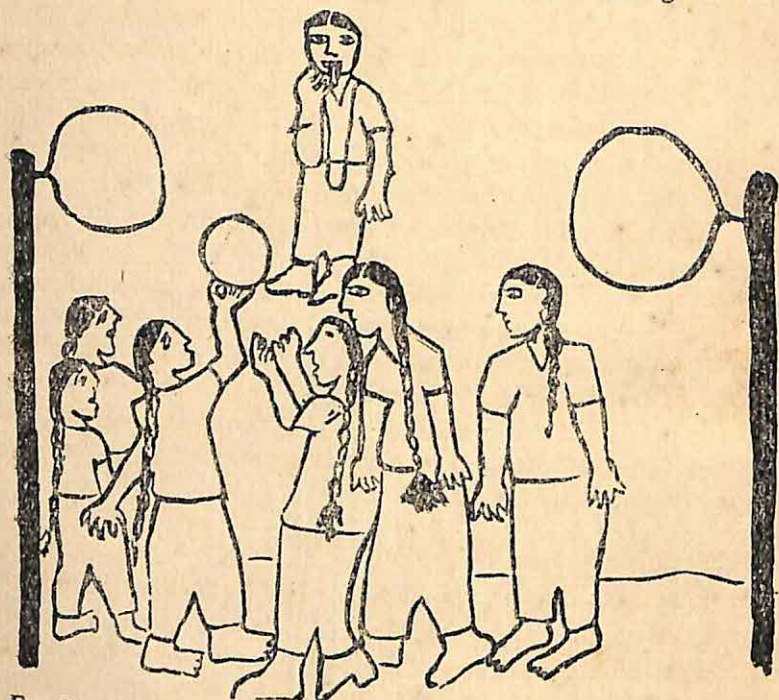


FIG. 26. 'Netball' by Dunham, aged 17. Water colour on white paper ; size 8" x 9". Note the correct pose of the girl shooting. This is typical of Dunham's work. She herself is very small.

structure of the body and a great deal of accurate observation of the appearance of things. The limbs are drawn in proportion and their position under the clothes can be imagined. These pupils can draw the human figure in any position—sitting, bending, walking, pushing—and can represent three-quarter view as well as full face, side view or back view. This is in contrast to the work of the majority.

It is usual to let a class paint their figures after drawing them as this offers scope for colour combination, for the intro-



duction of backgrounds and settings and for the inevitable decorative elaborations on the costumes.

Older students will show various types of figure studies, each having its merits. Some will be correct in appearance and proportion and also show action, though this is rather rare. Others draw figures which, while less correct, show much grace of line and make charming compositions. In others, again, the figure may be weak but the decoration of the clothes most felicitous. Even those drawings with glaring faults in proportion may show action in a telling manner; or a group in which the figures themselves are weak can be effectively interrelated and tell a story well. All these types may have merit.

There is still a danger that some pupils will stop developing and repeat themselves. They work too easily and develop mannerisms, drawing figures that are reminiscent of fashion plates or the popular pictures of cinema stars. The teacher has to devise means to divert their energies. Sometimes it may even be best to change the medium of work. Study of famous pictures is good for such pupils. They are passing beyond the bounds of Child Art and their needs should be met so that they may develop still further.

#### *Notes on some of the illustrations*

It is interesting to compare the figure drawing by Dunham and Manoraham (Figs. 1, 3, 24, 25, 26 and 46) with that of younger children. They had received no more instruction in the subject than the younger children, but they were seventeen and were both naturally gifted in different ways. They have both quite abandoned childish formulas for figures, though Jeyamoni in the same class retains them at the age of nineteen (Figs. 2 and 20). Dunham is a good dancer and draws her figures by imagining herself taking the pose in Figs. 24 and 26 while in Figs. 3 and 46 she is unconsciously concerned with the lines of the figure as part of a composition. In Fig. 24, she drew the limbs and then added the clothing whereas little children often draw the clothes and add arms and legs without thinking about the rest of the body under the clothes (Fig. 18).

Manoraham has an adult approach to art work and draws what she sees in front of her with considerable skill. She also

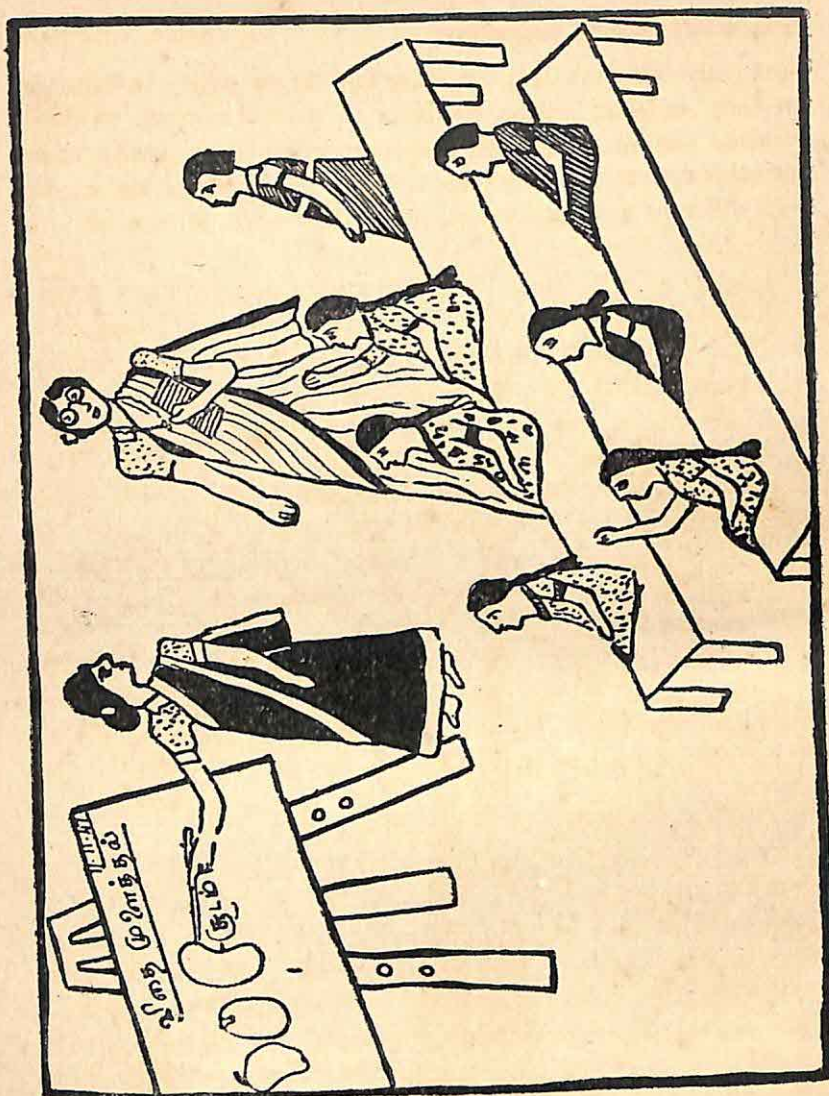


FIG. 27. 'Student teaching'—enter the supervisor' by R. Pushpam, aged 17. Water colour on white paper ; size 8" x 11". The student seems determined that the class shall not let her down before the supervisor!



draws crowds in a realistic way, one figure partly in front of another, and her perspective is more or less correct. This is unusual among Indian girls who more often retain a decorative, unrealistic, method of representation. It is interesting to see that different girls develop so differently in the same class.



FIG. 28. 'A cannon-ball tree' by Samathanam, aged 17. Water colour on white paper; size 8" x 11". The leaves are drawn decoratively. The flowers are drawn very large as the pupils like them greatly and often pick them up when they have fallen.

## PATTERN MAKING AND DESIGN

ALL Indian children love making patterns. India has a great heritage of design. It can be seen in pottery, carpets, textiles, wood-carving. We see it in the ornamental work on temples,

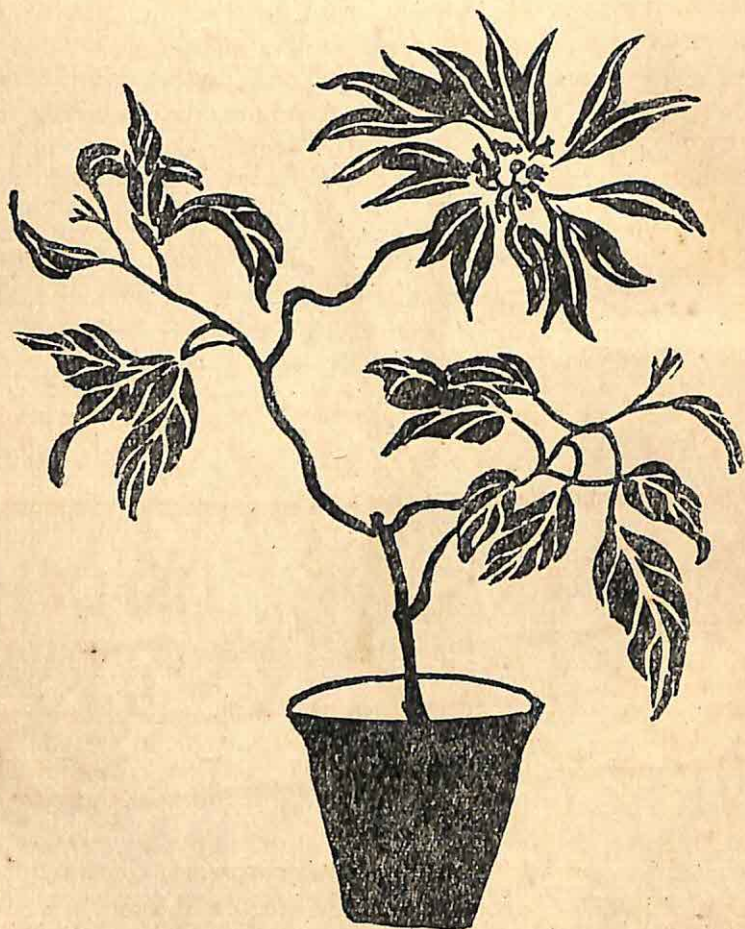


FIG. 29. 'Poinsettia' by girl of 14. Pencil and water colour on white paper ; size 8"  $\times$  11". This illustrates the tendency to treat a subject decoratively even when nothing has been said about doing so.



in inlay work, on the ceilings of Ajanta. Whether we look at the surrounds of Mogul paintings or the borders of modern saris, the brass and copper pots in daily use or the patterns in rice-flour before the threshold of a house, we continually find that design is an integral part of Indian life.

We can therefore give pattern making of some sort to any class of Indian children to whom we teach art, certain that they will produce something symmetrical and pleasing, with very little instruction. Historically, men first made patterns in connexion with some craft—ornamenting their clay pots or the handles of their weapons. But children in school find it easier to make a design on paper without having to concern themselves with any special use to which it might be put. The mere pleasure of painting it seems enough for them.

#### *Border patterns*

The simplest principle of decoration is repetition. Children use this when they put rows of dots, crosses or stars on their work, or surround their page with a border of little flowers. So let us begin with borders.

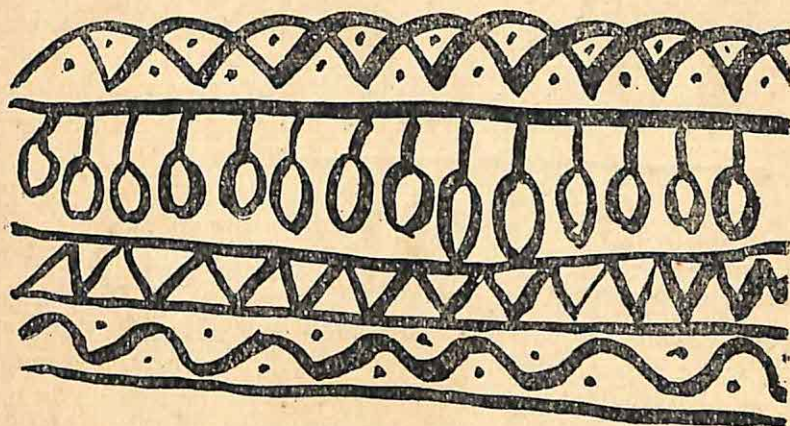
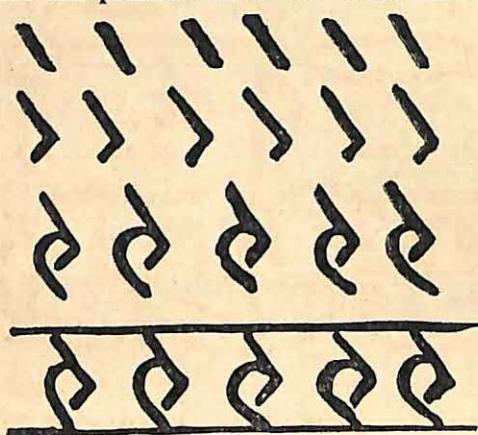


FIG. 30. Border pattern by girl, aged 9. Powder paint on newspaper; size 12" x 17". One colour. Large brush.

Little children can work without guide lines or they can make a fold in their paper to help them. They will put down their own unit freely and repeat it. They may build up the design by adding a further row below the first. They enjoy

putting a border all round their page and sometimes add elaborate corners. This can be done either in paint or with crayons (Fig. 30). They get a fair but not perfect result, some however doing remarkably well. The movement of the hand should be spontaneous, so it is not desirable to try and make their work more regular by measurement. Let us accept the degree of accuracy that they can achieve without it. Further up the school we can ask them to rule the lines for their borders, but within these they should work spontaneously.

Let us return to the potters and craftsmen of old. They began by putting a row of strokes or depressions along their work and then added a further row, touching or crossing the first. The rhythmic swing of the hand repeating the stroke helped to control it and make the later strokes similar to the first. We can use this primitive method. First make a row of strokes with a



brush, or stitches with a needle. They can be made almost at random. Then add a further row of strokes or dots harmonizing with the first in direction, shape and colour. A third may be made in the same way. By this time we are building up a pattern and consideration can be given to further ad-

ditions (Fig. 31). Spaces can be filled up entirely with colour or shaded with dots or stripes to give a pleasing border. Some of the more advanced types of design work described later can also be used for borders.

#### *All-over patterns*

We often want to cover a surface completely with pattern work. There will be a unit of a certain size which will be repeated in various ways to cover the whole space. The simplest way is to repeat the same unit again and again, row by row. Give



large sheets of paper to a class, tell them to fold them in squares and open them out again. This is a quick way of getting guiding lines that leave no mark on the design. Then proceed as for the border patterns, putting first one stroke in every square and then another as already described. The class should not vary the stroke throughout the whole piece of work. It should, however, be simple: we do not want an elaborate drawing each time.

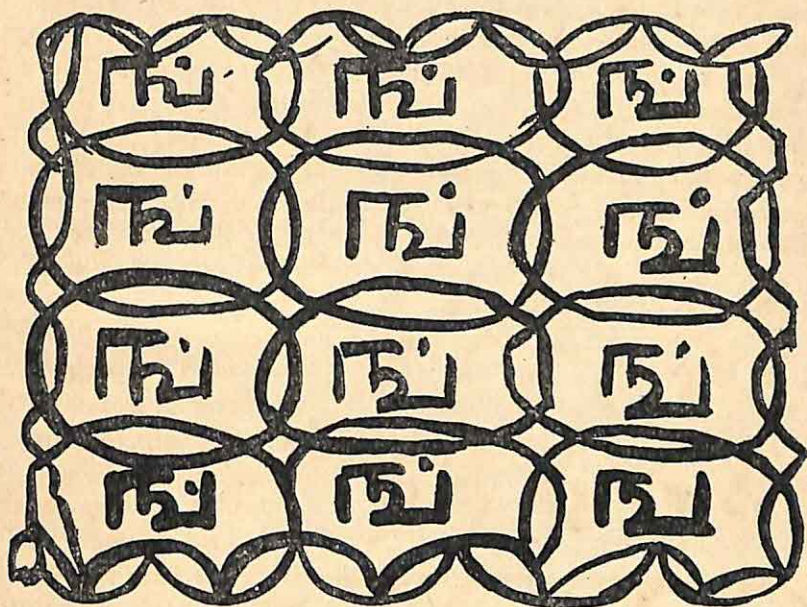


FIG. 32. All-over pattern based on a Tamil letter. First attempt at painting by girl of 11 in primary school. Done direct with large brush on newspaper in powder paint ; size 16" × 13".

One good way to achieve the desired result is to ask the children to make use of an Indian letter or a number. The children are used to forming these in a certain way and so the unit stays uniform throughout the whole piece of work, whereas arbitrary strokes are apt to vary as the pattern proceeds. The design may be built up so that the units are joined to those above, below and on either side, making it continuous over the whole area.

In a good design the original letter or stroke is lost in the general pattern and can only be distinguished when it is looked into carefully. Many children do not succeed in



making such a complicated and unified pattern, but even if the letter is repeated obviously, the result may be attractive (Figs. 32 and 33).

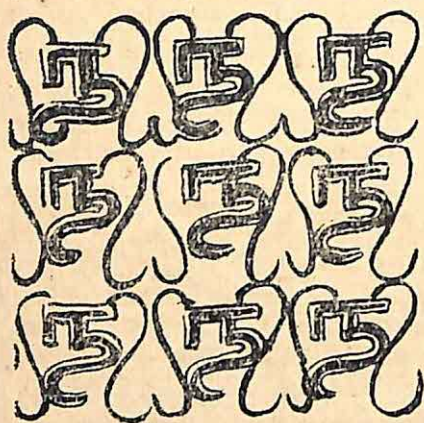


FIG. 33. All-over pattern based on a Tamil letter by girl of 16. Drawn in pencil and then painted; size 3" x 3".

These patterns can be done on paper as large as 16" x 13" using large bristle brushes (Fig. 32). They can also be done on a small scale in 1" or 1½" ruled squares (Fig. 33). If they are done large, the brush work must be free and is often very striking. Free brush work is also desirable in the smaller work.

#### *Other easy ways of making patterns*

All this is elementary and primitive. Pupils do it almost spontaneously. The only problem is to keep them from introducing more elaborate schemes of their own. There is a tendency to regard the page, not as a sample of an all-over pattern that goes on indefinitely, but as a design in itself. They will tend to make the centre of the page different; if not in the drawing, then in the painting. A border of a different kind will gratuitously appear all round the given piece of all-over pattern. On the whole, therefore, it is found better to try to insist that the children only do what is required in each lesson so that the teacher can set other possible schemes as separate exercises later. But it is most interesting to see how strong the innate sense of pattern can be.

Sometimes the teacher may ask a class to draw a design freely all over the page. He may suggest that they start with a dot in the centre and work outwards. Radiating lines or concentric circles may be the scheme. This has proved equally successful with children of eight, with high school pupils and with adults. Alternatively he may tell them to put a border round the page and then build up a design inside it.



With pupils over twelve, the teacher may suggest a definite shape to be drawn with ruler and compasses, in which they can draw and then paint a design. A circle, a half-circle, a square, a diamond are possible shapes. He must make up his mind whether he will allow ruler and compasses to be used throughout. If he does, the design may become very mechanical and it may be well to forbid their use once the guide lines have been drawn.

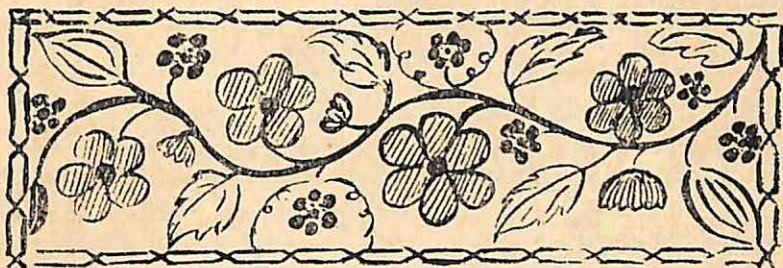


FIG. 34. Border pattern by girl of 15. Pencil and water colour; size 8"×3".

Some interesting variations have been tried with primary school children. Classes have been given paper cut in the shape of a jumper blouse and told to decorate it. They were very keen to put a suitable pattern on it. First the neck and sleeves and hem were ornamented and then an all-over pattern of stripes or dots was painted over the rest. The given shape helped their imagination. If a paper cut in the shape of a large pot is given, they can ornament it in the way that earthen pots are sometimes ornamented for weddings (though they will not be able to indicate the foreshortening of the design as it goes round the pot).

Middle school pupils can draw a vase, or other vessel, and paint designs on it. These vessels look very effective when cut out and mounted on dark paper. A very great variety of lessons can be taught without going beyond this stage: for instance, a circular design can be painted for a plate. But with high school pupils we can expect patterns that have a more difficult scheme, that are not so directly primitive in their appeal.

#### *Harder patterns with an abstract unit*

Instead of making our all-over patterns by the simple repeti-

tion of one unit, we may use two alternate units; or we can repeat the unit in reverse; or a unit can be turned in four directions to give a new and more elaborate unit [Figs. 35, 35(a) and 35(b)].

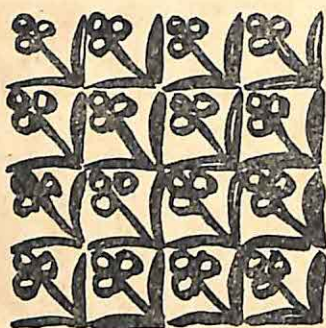


FIG. 35

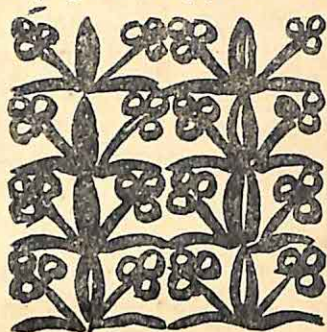


FIG. 35(a)

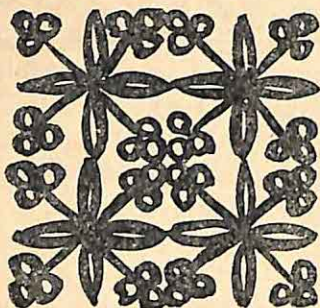


FIG. 35(b)

All-over patterns. Three ways of using the same unit by Susila, aged 15. Pencil and water colour on white paper; size 4" x 4" each.

A well-known device among designers is the 'drop repeat' pattern. Here each unit is repeated half way down the last one so that the rows of pattern run diagonally across the page. For painting, it is necessary to rule the squares, 'dropping' every alternate one. In printing with lino or potato blocks, the block can be placed carefully half way down the last print and a satisfactory result obtained. 'Counterchange' is also used by designers and is a favourite method in weaving patterns. For instance, what is black in the first unit is white in the second, and vice versa (Fig. 36). This only uses two colours, one of which should be dark and one light in order to obtain a good contrast. It is quite difficult to manage and is an intellectual device that does not appeal to a primitive sense of symmetry. It is not suitable with beginners, therefore, but is a useful exercise for an older class who want some variation.



## PATTERN MAKING AND DESIGN

### *Designs based on natural forms or manufactured objects*

All the units suggested above have been abstract forms, not representing any known object. Plant and animal forms are

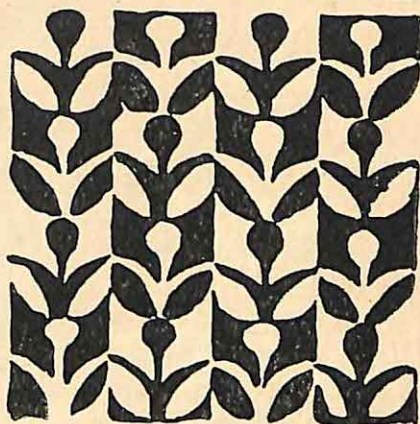


FIG. 36. 'Counterchange' by girl of 14. Paint on white paper ; size 4" x 4".

traditionally used in Persian and Chinese as well as in Indian designs. There is much rich pattern work based on flowers at Ajanta. Kashmir painting and embroidery design make full use of both flowers and animals while plant forms are common in South Indian carvings. Children will follow tradition in adapting leaves, flowers, and fruits for use in design, but we should see that those they choose are suitable. Many common creepers are most decorative and flowing and can be used with good effect. Some leaf forms are also decorative and these are preferable to very simple leaves. Cosmos, sunflower, and the flower of the gold mohur tree are particularly suitable for this work and there are small wild plants whose leaves are suitable.

The problem is to adapt the natural form to the requirements of the design. Theoretically this is hard, but some children do it intuitively. A few, of course, will not catch the idea and will merely draw a row of leaves, or will introduce shapes that have no connexion with the plant given, or imaginary flowers, dots, crosses and butterflies. Stress the idea that the given plant is the basis of the work. The children can arrange the buds, stalks and flowers as they like and conventionalize them, but should be helped to keep the characteristics of the plant chosen. An artist sees something in a plant form that he wants to use and his design shows the underlying characteristics whose beauty he has

perceived. The quality that makes us call the plant decorative is what the design should bring out (Fig. 37). There will almost certainly be a few pupils in the class who grasp this and the

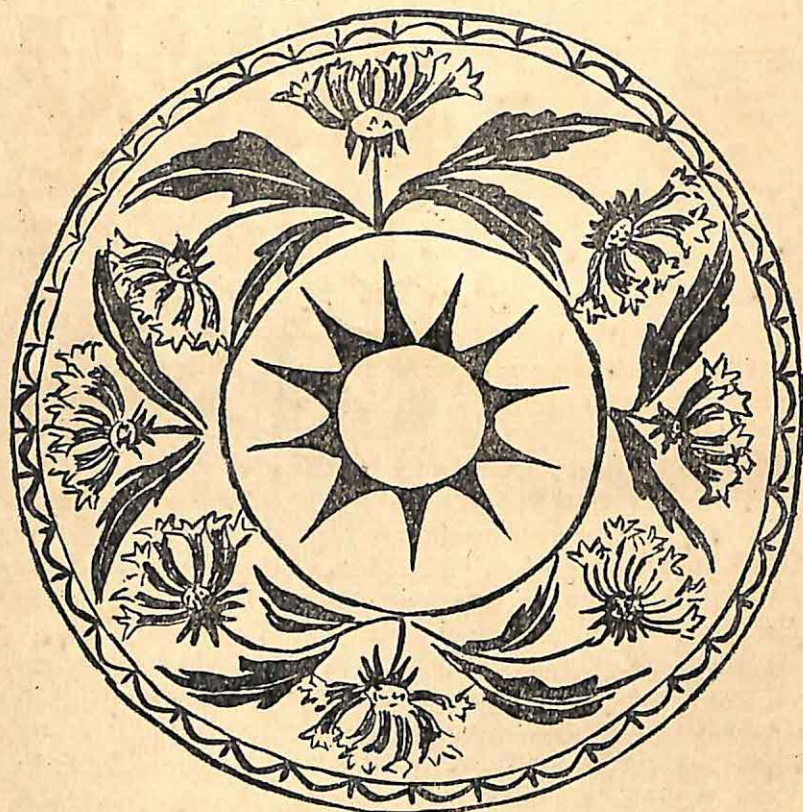


FIG. 37. Design for a plate based on gaillardia flower, by girl of 18.  
Pencil and water colour on white paper ; size 7" x 7".

teacher can point to their work and say ' This is what I mean '. Next time more people will succeed. Pupils are unlikely to use animals or birds well in designs because they do not really know their shapes well enough. There is little satisfaction for anyone in badly drawn birds or conventional ducks and elephants that do not show first-hand appreciation of form. When we appreciate a thing so much that we feel we must draw it, then we get a good design.

Another suitable type of unit is one based on common objects. Cooking pots, an umbrella, a tennis racket, either



alone or in combination with something else, can provide units that have pleasing shapes and colours. This type may be used in borders or all-over patterns. Children can draw these well enough to get a good effect (Fig. 38).



FIG. 38. Border pattern with common object by girl of 16. Pencil and paint on white paper ; size 8" x 3".

### *Painting the design*

Most designs look best if they have a light wash of background colour all over the area. Dull yellow is a good colour for this. The design painted on the background should be moderately dark so as to show up well. Colour should always be flat in designs, not shaded from light to dark. Colours that go well together should be used and it is to be hoped that the class will gradually progress towards good colour schemes. When two fairly dark colours are used near each other, a narrow strip of background should be left between them to define them. Veins of leaves may be shown in the same way. Black can be introduced with telling effect, but ought to be used last of all because it can be painted on top of any other colour. If it is put on first or second, other colours tend to touch it when they are wet and become darkened. Brush and paint-water are also dirtied by the use of black, so that colours used subsequently are less pure.

### *The use of pattern for practical purposes*

While the children are painting patterns of various kinds in their books, they should also be introducing patterns in their craftwork. They will paint or indent them on clay, embroider them on cloth, use them in lino-cutting, on cardboard models, and on leather work. The different materials modify the type of design. Paint on paper is not the only medium of art work and children need to realize this.

There are, however, several ways in which children can paint patterns on paper articles that have a practical use. They can

make greetings cards and programmes, and borders can be put round time-tables or presentation addresses. A considerable area in their notebooks, say two pages, can be covered with an all-over pattern. Then these can be cut out and used for a book cover. Children may add a strip of book-binder's cloth for the back and rub the whole with bees-wax and so render it more durable. When they prepare a design for a purpose, they have to keep it clean and unspoilt throughout the whole area and take care about the cutting out and fitting to the required dimensions. This is good discipline.

### *The qualities of good pattern work*

Repetition and variation are the basic qualities of pattern work. The design should suit the space it has to fill and the materials in which it will be carried out. The flow of the lines should be pleasing. Mass and space should be suitably balanced. It should form a unity, each part contributing to the whole. The colour scheme should be harmonious. The shapes used may be purely abstract, representing nothing; but if they represent actual objects, the drawing of them must be conventionalized and the units planned to make a good design. They should not be introduced merely for what they mean.

### *The study of pattern work*

We are unconsciously influenced by the designs we see around us so that the work done by good pupils will affect the rest, whether the teacher draws attention to it or not. It is easier to procure examples of traditional Indian designs than to find good pictures, so the teacher will be able to direct his pupils' attention to good designs when he may find it hard to get the material for other kinds of art appreciation. In looking at a design one may ask: Is it pleasing and if so why? What is the unit that is repeated? Is it a traditional motif and what is its origin? Anyone who himself attempts to make designs will find his vision quickened to appraise every design that meets his eye so he will enjoy and benefit by the study of beautiful designs wherever they can be found.



COLOUR STUDY<sup>1</sup>

IN recent years a scientific study has been made of colours, their combination and contrast, based on the natural order of colours in the spectrum. Artists in most countries have known nothing of this but have evolved their own traditional colour schemes which are usually very beautiful. It is interesting to discover that these schemes follow the laws for good colour combinations worked out through this modern scientific study.

The traditional sari colours of South India are very brilliant: the orange and turquoise, green and red, blue and yellow of Coornad saris correspond exactly with the strongest contrasts we can find on the colour circle. These are very suitable for the bright sunshine of the tropics, which demands full glowing hues and makes paler tints look washed-out and feeble. We discover that in strong sunshine, brilliant colours look best; in a northern climate, with paler sunshine, pastel shades look best; and in dark rooms and churches and temples, rich glowing colours are right. The carpet-maker knew this and that is why rugs are made with strong, deep colours that do not always look well in bright modern rooms. In the same way, the pictures made for churches in the West may look too brilliant if shown on the walls of art galleries for which they were never intended.

Colours should be thought of in combination with other colours as well as in connexion with the light in which they will be seen. This is what children very often do not do. They enjoy colour for colour's sake and normally use their favourite pinks and purples freely. At other times, however, they are so bounded by the natural or conventional colour of an object that the idea of a harmonious colour scheme has no chance to develop in their minds.

A colour may be used in what is termed a 'fully saturated

<sup>1</sup> Further information on the subject-matter of this chapter may be found in *Colour* by Barrett Carpenter (see Appendix 1, p. 149.)

solution', sometimes called a hue. When it is in this state you cannot make it any brighter by adding more colour. A colour circle can be made showing all the colours of the rainbow melting into each other, each one at full strength. The Ostwald colour circle shows this with yellow at the top and deep blue at the bottom and the colours graded as they are in light. In their natural order, as found in the colour circle, yellow is the lightest and royal blue the darkest. Purple is darker than red but red is darker than orange. On the other side, yellowish-green melts into bluish-green which again melts into blue, the colours getting deeper in tone.

If we put side by side two colours that lie opposite to each other on the circle, we get the greatest possible contrast and the colours add to each other's brilliance, as in Coornad saris. On the other hand, if we want richness and harmony, we should take neighbouring colours. The woman who wears a blue and green shot-silk sari or a royal blue sari with a purple blouse, is showing her appreciation of neighbouring colours. Colours used in their natural order, that is the order in which they occur in the colour circle, produce an effect of harmony and brilliance. For little children, and in peasant embroiderys, strong blue, green, red and yellow give pleasing effects. These are colours that occur in full strength in the circle of hues.

It is possible to make a much lighter circle with a paler version of each colour but still keep them in their natural order of tone value. We do this by adding white to the original hues or, if we are dealing with water colours, by adding water. We then get light blues and greens, delicate yellows and pinks, and a lighter purple or heliotrope. Again we get harmony if we use the colours in their natural order, keeping the purple darkest and the yellow lightest, as they are in light, and in the fully saturated colours. But we get 'discord' if we use them out of their natural order, if (for instance) we put orange beside pink and heliotrope beside a darker blue, or yellowish-green beside a lighter bluish-green. Large masses of discordant colour are very unpleasant and 'sickly'. It is unfortunate that a child's love of pink as a colour will often lead him to give a pink background that clashes with other colours in his design, whereas a pale yellow background would probably go with everything.



Tiny quantities of discordant colour, on the other hand, lend piquancy to a colour scheme; a heliotrope stripe, for instance, may be pleasing, but a cushion cover with a heliotrope background would look wrong if green leaves and blue flowers were worked on it.

By mixing black in equal quantities with all the colours of the circle, we get a circle of 'shades' or dull colours. These shades are used very successfully in many colour schemes instead of or along with the brilliant hues. Small children and primitive races prefer the bright hues.

A scientific knowledge of colour combinations is helpful when making schemes for interior decoration, for textiles, and so on. Some understanding of the principles of natural order, harmony and contrast is also very useful when we see that a particular colour combination is displeasing but cannot quite tell what is wrong. The tone value must follow the natural order—that found in the spectrum or the rainbow. In nature we find this same scheme at work. The blue sky at the zenith becomes paler and greener towards the horizon. In a sunset, crimson passes into scarlet and then into orange and yellow, each becoming lighter in tone. We see the light yellow-green of fresh foliage standing out against the darker bluish-green of the older leaves.

Books of the Ostwald colours in 24 shades used to be available from Dryad Handicrafts and it was possible to get hues, shades and light tints. Gummed papers in the eight chief colours are often available and it is interesting to cut them out to make a colour circle or to mount them on cards and try different colour combinations. They can also be copied fairly well with an ordinary water-colour paint box. It is possible to buy 'New Art' powder colours, or paint boxes, in the eight standard colours. These can be used for experiments and demonstrations. To the class and interesting effects can be obtained in harmony, discord or contrast. Any three of the eight chief colours that are adjacent in the colour circle give a pleasing harmony, and when combined with a small quantity of the colour opposite to the middle one, we get a shared contrast that is attractive. But it is not possible to do much systematic teaching on colour unless exact colours and full hues can be obtained. When we say 'red'



we must know whether we mean strong scarlet or a watery crimson lake. So it is of little use to give exercises on colour combinations when the children only have pale watery paints. Unless we have proper apparatus, it is best not to explain the theory of colour but to trust to the natural taste of the teacher and the children to get good results.

China and Persia knew nothing of theoretical colour combinations and yet they produced delicate and subtle harmonies. Pupils might be shown reproductions of objects of Persian, Chinese and Indian art and asked to discover the colour harmonies used.

Though, as we have said, children sometimes make unpleasing colour arrangements at first, we find that it is possible to improve their taste bit by bit. The teacher should be careful what colours he provides. Sometimes it is best to restrict them to a typical old Indian range of colours: brick red, ochre, olive green, brown, indigo and black. These give very artistic effects. At other times we might exclude such 'dangerous' colours as pink and violet, while otherwise providing the colours found in modern paint boxes. The teacher can dictate the colour of a background in a design and limit the number of colours that may be used on it, or he can ask pupils to consult him before making their selection.

Another possibility is to let them draw a woman in a sari and paint the whole so as to make a good dress scheme. They are more likely to exercise careful choice when they are doing this than when they are painting an abstract design as they like. It is their interest in individual colours and neglect to consider their effect in combination that leads to unpleasing results. Some adolescents develop a very good colour sense. They often use brilliant hues with pleasing and distinctly oriental effect. Where at first they used the brightest possible, they grow to prefer subtle combinations of strong and dull colours with small quantities of discord that add to the effect. Their natural good taste in choosing the colours of their clothes comes into play when they do these costume studies.

When pupils make designs with units based on natural forms, such as a plant, they often think they are bound to use its natural colours. They should be shown that this is not necessary,



and told that any harmonious colours may be used for leaf, flower or stalk and that a pleasing effect is more important than literal accuracy. When they realize this they will enjoy the new freedom to arrange their colour schemes according to their taste.

### *Notes on pigments*

As it is sometimes difficult to know how best to make use of the pigments sold for painting to obtain the desired colour effects, some hints on their qualities are given here.

*Crimson Lake*: A favourite colour supplied in paint boxes or in powder form. Very popular with children. It tends to spoil children's work because it is used excessively if available. When mixed with white a bright pink is obtained that is also very popular though not good in combination with most colours. If mixed with Ultramarine, purple is produced.

*Vermilion*: A bright scarlet that is, on the whole, much better than Crimson Lake in colour combinations. This colour will mix with yellow but does not produce purple if mixed with blue.

*Indian Red*: A brownish red that is artistic but not bright enough to please children.

*Cobalt*: A very beautiful blue but not a strong colour. Children use it up very quickly. It is essential for outdoor sketching.

*Ultramarine*: A strong, very bright blue. The best blue for children's pictures and designs. It is supplied in paint boxes and in powder form. Makes a good green when mixed with Gamboge.

*Prussian Blue*: A very strong and rather greenish blue. It is not adequate as the only blue for a class. Gives a good green when mixed with Gamboge but will not make purple.

*Indigo*: A dull, strong blue. It is artistic and useful for dyeing fibre and painting clay work, but it is not bright enough to serve as blue in a picture.

*Gamboge*: A beautiful, bright lemon yellow that is nevertheless a delicate colour. The brush and water and paper need to be clean, or the brilliant effect is destroyed. Makes a good green when mixed with blue, but only a little blue is needed to a large

quantity of yellow; also makes orange when mixed with red. Soon exhausted in a paint box.

*Chrome Yellow*: A useful strong yellow. Makes a dull green when mixed with blue.

*Yellow Ochre*: This is a dull yellow. Excellent for backgrounds when applied in a wash and most artistic in pictures. Does not mix well with other paints.

*Red Ochre, Brown, Burnt Umber, etc*: Children should have access to some of these colours as well as to bright colours. They will serve for flesh tints when mixed with white, and are useful, unmixed, in pictures and designs. Darker shades can be obtained by mixing black with them.

*Green*: Various kinds of green are supplied, all of them useful for designs and for children's pictures. For realistic nature painting and outdoor sketching, however, green should be made by combining Gamboge and blue. Green is quickly used up in paint boxes and then a combined colour must be made.

*Black*: Lamp black or some other kind of black paint or powder is needed. It is most effective when used in designs, but its use should be postponed till the rest of the painting is nearly finished. It can be put on top of anything else.

*White*: Chinese White, flake white, and powder are available. If Chinese White dries up, it can be moistened and used if well rubbed. It is necessary to mix it with other colours when painting on a dark or medium paper. It should not be used to paint white objects on white paper as children sometimes try to do.



## ART FOR ADOLESCENTS

*Lack of imagination*

LITTLE children are full of spontaneity. They are usually quick to finish their work and do not alter it much as they go along. Older pupils are apt to lose this self-confidence and spontaneity and to have fewer original ideas. When they try to express those they have, they are self-critical and feel they cannot draw what they want to adequately. They are apt to be influenced by pictures and drawings they have seen and to pay too much attention to other people's opinions. They substitute conventional representations for original work. Those who have not had much contact with books and who have had little art teaching of any kind are fairly unspoilt material, and it is not difficult to begin new art methods with them at adolescence. But those who have had a good deal of education, and have been taught art on wrong lines, are a more difficult proposition.

*Establishing self-confidence*

While some adolescent pupils do work that is sophisticated, others seem unable to produce an imaginative picture of any sort. Both have lost the charming characteristics of little children's work and the teacher has to try to find some means of inducing them to work freely and with confidence in their powers. Somehow they must be helped to get a result that gives them satisfaction, for if they are dissatisfied with everything they begin and give it up, they will never achieve anything. This is why pattern work is good for them. The most diffident pupils can paint a known letter in a series of squares. Little originality is needed to develop this into a design as described in a previous chapter. A fairly good pattern can be obtained almost by chance and they soon find themselves adding a touch here and there to produce an effect of which they can be proud. The same is true of adult beginners who are still more diffident than adolescents.

It is very necessary with adolescents and adults to avoid the type of material or subject they have used in the old-fashioned formal drawing lessons. If such pupils are given pencils, they may relapse into the old methods; but if a piece of charcoal is put into their hands, they are obliged to work in a bold way because it does not lend itself to minute detail. It is a good plan sometimes to give them the large bristle brushes, saucers of paint and large sheets of paper that are used for the younger children. Then they will be encouraged to paint boldly and directly, whether on a design or on some subject, such as a flowering tree, where they are not tied to any special form but can let themselves go with the brush. A new medium, a new type of subject may startle them into bold work and self-expression that have been killed by the old type of lesson.

Although these pupils have lost much in imagination, they have gained in powers of accuracy, perseverance and deliberate skilful manipulation of their materials. We find them making elaborate plans and carrying them out over four periods or more. (They should at this stage always have a double period for art.)

Some pictures may be realistic, others very decorative, others possess a well-balanced composition and all may have merit; but, as has been said, we *must* cure them of merely imitating pictures they have seen. This is very common and, although the uninstructed think it shows great merit, it has no place in real art, still less in Child Art.

#### *Realistic representation*

As imagination fades, many children develop a taste for drawing what they see in front of them. It is wrong to force little children to do this, but for adolescents it is often the right thing. In our chapter on children's figure drawing we have described this tendency and explained the method of drawing from life in the upper classes. The same tendency occurs in other types of drawing lessons: boys will enjoy making detailed drawings of cars, machines and instruments from a model or from memory; both boys and girls like to sketch, say, the school gate or front entrance. They will draw a cycle, a rickshaw, a bullock cart, a corner of the school, a small shed in the com-



pound, or a shrine. This may not be art of a high grade, but it is far from mere photographic representation. For instance, they will tend to draw a front elevation of a building, even though they are sitting far to one side of it; and though they put in each cornice and ledge with care, they are not particular about proportions, but draw a building to fit into the size of their page, irrespective of its real height and breadth. Their work, in short, is idealistic, rather than realistic and they will be entirely indifferent to the perspective involved. When they bring the work indoors to colour it, they will paint the brickwork most meticulously, adding stylized plants in pots, and branches of trees, and exaggerating any stone ornamentation. They may be encouraged to choose imaginary colours for their building and fill in the rest of the picture, sky and ground, as they like. There is scope for originality even here and at the end we shall find that each picture is different, reflecting the temperament of the pupil.

### *Art crafts and art appreciation*

Many of the art crafts described in the Part III will suit adolescents. While offering particular scope to really artistic pupils, all pupils can make some attempt at them and those who only achieve correctness and neatness of execution deserve praise and will feel satisfaction in their work.

At adolescence, pupils can be taught something about art appreciation and make drawings of local art forms (e.g. of the surrounding architecture) or copy traditional patterns when they visit museums (see Chapter 17).

### *Painting technique*

Children who begin young with saucers of paint ready mixed will more or less teach themselves to paint and they will become accustomed to working with the paint very wet. Those who start at a later age and have paint boxes and the chance to mix their own colours may need a little instruction from time to time, for paints from a paint box are sometimes used in an unsuitable way for water-colour work. Some general observations, chiefly to middle- and high-school pupils, on the use of water colours and powder colours are therefore given here.



Painting should begin in the top left-hand corner and work downwards and to the right; then the hand does not smudge what has already been done. When paint has once been applied, it should be left until it is dry before it is again touched. Wet paint touching the edge of another colour will run into it and if a half-dry surface is touched with a wetter paint, the result is unfortunate. Half-dry paint cannot be improved. When it is quite dry, a further colour may be painted on top, or small alterations made by washing out, but the less it is worked upon, the better. Water-colour paints are pigments made of particles to reflect the light in one colour. If they are much mixed or washed out and repainted, they lose their purity, fail to reflect the light and merely give a dull colour. For a background or sky, very wet paint should be used; for ordinary work it should be fairly wet; for small details it should generally be rather thick and dry, but the habit of painting an area, say the surface of a flower petal, with tiny strokes of very dry colour, is not to be commended. It is characteristic of water-colour work that it should show that the paint has been applied wet. Children working on modern lines do this, for they work quickly and rarely trouble to alter their work. Alterations in water-colour painting should be reduced to a minimum as it is almost impossible to rectify mistakes.

When pupils use a paint box for the first time, they need some direction. The brush should first be dipped into clean water, then on to the pan of paint, and the paint transferred to the palette provided inside the lid of the box. The paint is applied to the paper from the palette. When a large area is to be covered, plenty of paint should be mixed on the palette before the work is begun. Children tend to leave out some of these processes, painting straight from the pan to the paper or omitting to provide themselves with water. Do not let them keep the water in one of the divisions of the palette; in the first place it will not hold a sufficient supply and it may spoil the paints. The brush can be drawn to a point on the edge of the palette, and superfluous paint left there.

To cover a large area smoothly with paint is not easy. As has been said, sufficient paint must be mixed before beginning. Then the painter must not let one portion of the work dry before



the adjacent space is covered. If he does, a hard line forms where the two colours meet and this spoils the effect. Children often begin to cover an area by messing to and fro with the brush in the middle. This is bad for the brush and does not give a satisfactory result. The work, beginning in the top left-hand corner, should be carried out in streaks across the whole width of the space, the brush being held horizontally and drawn to the right. Alternatively, the painting may be done downwards, but there must be plenty of paint in the brush and the work must proceed fairly quickly, or it will dry in the doing. Big brushes are best for this part of the work, even if finer ones are used later.

When painting flowers and when doing some designs, it is a good plan to draw entirely with the brush. This is the Indian and Chinese method, and a good brush is an excellent tool for drawing sensitive lines of varying thickness. A pencil is useful for making a general outline, but it is wrong if children's painting consists merely in colouring their pencil drawings and not of definite free work with the brush.

Adolescents and adults can use powder paint in a more advanced way than that described for beginners. Each pupil should have a tile or some flat surface to use as a palette. On this he mixes small quantities of powder with water, and often with white, and thus produces a variety of tints. With these he paints, preferably on a large sheet, in a bold manner. As the paint is opaque he can wash it out, and paint over it and alter his work at will. The older pupil whose work is deliberate and lengthy finds this an advantage. In this way, large and elaborate pictures can be painted and teachers find it a very good way of preparing illustrations for their lessons. They can even make pictures for the walls of class-rooms. In the hands of artistic pupils and teachers, powder paint is an effective medium and it is easier to do advanced work in it than in water colour.

A convenient utensil for holding powder paints is a baking-tin such as Western housewives use for making little cakes. These tins can be bought in the bazaars of most towns. Into the small depressions meant for cakes, the painter can put the different coloured powders he is likely to need. He mixes them on his tile as required.

## MATERIALS

It is possible to teach art fairly effectively in the middle school, and to a limited extent in the high school, without spending very much on equipment. Nevertheless, if art is an important subject in education, we must be prepared to spend something.

### *Paper*

Much use can be made of the ordinary school drawing notebooks, especially the large size about 8" × 11". The paper it contains is suitable both for pencil and paint. The advantage is that the child has his sheet of paper all ready in his hand for the lesson and can take care of his finished work in the book. It is better in some ways that children should work on separate sheets of paper, but these have to be provided before each lesson and some arrangement made for taking care of them. Some teachers make each child construct a portfolio to hold his own work. Perhaps the best arrangement is to let pupils have a drawing notebook for general use and from time to time to supply sheets of paper when something different is required. For some work, the children need to cover a large space and finish the work quickly, so that much paper is required. Moreover, if work is not going to be painted over several times, but the paint only laid on once and left, a cheap quality of paper is sufficient. Unprinted newsprint is satisfactory if it can be obtained, or that unbleached printing paper known as badami. In any case, the paper should be slightly absorbent: cream laid paper does not take paint well. Do not tell children to bring paper for themselves, for the pieces they bring are too small and often too smooth. For some lessons, brown paper makes a good ground, provided the rough, unglazed side is used, for rough paper is always better than shiny paper.

### *Brushes*

Paint brushes are a problem in this country. For artist's work, sable brushes are best but they are prohibitive in cost for school use. Any really satisfactory brush costs several rupees, even if it is obtainable. The next best thing for schools are



imported school paint brushes, costing between As. 10 and Re. 1. Size 5 is best but sizes 3 or 4 can be used. They are well-made and give a good point that produces a fine line.

The traditional Indian paint brushes were made of squirrels' hair, and squirrels-hair brushes are still sold in many bazaars in India for about two annas each. They are not well made, however, and soon perish. Teachers should try to induce the manufacturers to make them shorter and thicker. They should be carefully cut so that they give a point when dipped in water. If they are dipped in gum and then dried, the point can be dipped in wet paint and will give a fine line. We badly need a supply of suitable paint brushes at a reasonable price that are sufficiently well-made for our purpose. This need is general throughout India.

For the work of small children and beginners, bristle brushes are best. Coir brushes are generally useless, but some made of horse hair, sold for two or three annas, can be used. They are useful with both powder or poster paint and will last for a long time.

Supplies of brushes can be bought for the school and kept by the teacher. They should be washed out after each lesson and carefully stored flat in a tin or point upwards in a jar, as they are liable to be spoilt by insects if left exposed.

### *Paints and pastels*

Different types of paint have different advantages. For young children and for school use, there is much to be said for New Art powder paint supplied in saucers to the class in general as described in Chapter 5. This is not very expensive. A tin should last a long time if used carefully and half a dozen colours will suffice. The disadvantage of this paint is its unsuitability for use in notebooks or for making charts, as it is inclined to rub off. In all other respects it is excellent.

We should, however, try to make all the use we can of indigenous material which is both cheaper and more often available. The usual bazaar colours are useful and can be bought in packets, or by the ounce, in yellow, green, blue, red and other colours. Distemper intended for colour-washing walls can also be used in class, as well as red ochre and yellow ochre meant for



floors or walls. At Sevagram nothing but earth colours are used; but it is difficult and expensive for the average teacher to get all the right colours that are needed in the classroom. Indigo, for instance, while easily obtainable, is a rather dull blue; and when we use these 'natural' colours we must grind them in a mortar before use and mix them with gum. Without gum, the powder will not mix with the water; or, if it mixes, it refuses to stay on the paper. A good deal of gum (broken up and dissolved in cold water) should be used, and it should be clean, or it will spoil the colour of the paint.

Poster paints are good for class work. They are comparatively expensive initially but fairly economical in the long run if properly used—as well as being easy to store and transport. Do not let the children use the jars of paint but pour a little into dishes and add water. If the paint in the jar dries up, add some water and after it has soaked for a little break it up with a sharp stick and pour off the paint that has dissolved.

Water-colour paint boxes are in some ways the best form of colour for older pupils. They should be of good quality, either Reeves' or some other reliable make costing about Re. 1-8 a box. The teacher should experiment with a particular type of box before buying it in large quantities because some only contain unsatisfactory paints that give a pale and chalky result. There is no need to have a large number of colours in a box as different shades can be obtained by mixing them. The transparent effect of water colours, however, is not very suitable for little children, although it is much appreciated by older pupils and artists.

It saves a good deal of organization in a class if every pupil can bring his own paint box, brush and drawing book together with water in a small pot or bottle and a piece of rag. Experience has shown that pupils soon finish the yellow, blue and crimson in their boxes so the teacher should buy a few tubes of these colours (about 7 annas each tube) and refill the boxes by squeezing a small quantity into the empty pans. In this way the boxes can be made to last a long time.

As in the case of brushes, there is a great need for the indigenous manufacture of painting materials to be sold in this country in a form that makes them easy to use for school work.



Pastels and crayons may be used by small children but unfortunately the pastels are very quickly lost or broken. A box now costs about twelve annas. Reeves' Greyhound pastels are very good but other types of crayons will serve.

Part III  
ART CRAFTS





## THE VALUE OF ART CRAFTS IN SCHOOL

HANDICRAFTS figure largely in education schemes nowadays, not only for small children but also for older ones. The purpose of this section is to describe and draw attention only to those types of handicraft which give scope for originality and artistic gifts. To a small extent these qualities are called for in basketry, weaving, carpentry and plain needlework; but as in these subjects most of the time must necessarily be given to learning the traditional methods they fall outside the scope of this book. We are concerned here only with types of handwork that may be called applied art or art crafts. Along with manual dexterity, they allow for choice of colour, the creation of good design in the objects themselves, harmonious lines, pleasing ornamentation.

From the earliest times there has been much more applied art than mere drawing and painting. Potters and wood- and metal-workers made utensils that had pleasing shapes and were finished with suitable ornaments. Women sewed garments with traditional designs, formed as they went along, as do the Todas of the Nilgiris today. The traditional masks and costumes for dances and dramas are examples of applied folk-art. Dolls and toy carts and animals were made for children by craftsmen working in wood or papier mâché. Cloth was printed by handblocks cut in wood. Articles were made for a purpose and their design and ornamentation were conditioned by the materials in which men worked and the purpose for which they were required. Today in the West, most of the traditional handicrafts have disappeared and in India they are fast giving place to goods made and ornamented by mechanical processes. But in the schools we ought to keep and repeat the handicrafts. There is a great psychological satisfaction to pupils in doing this, in repeating the experience of the race. Children make things for joy and not for commercial purposes and they can take time to make things by hand and to put their hearts into their work. They will usually like to keep and use what they have made or give it to their friends.



Some of the crafts described here lead up to commercial and industrial art and pupils may go on to take up these occupations professionally. There are often two ways of doing a craft: the professionally correct way which is used by the craftsman and taught in the art school; and the primitive experimental way, with simpler apparatus, which is actually more suitable to the child in the elementary or secondary school. Educationally we want to give a child the chance to experiment and go through the primitive processes and solve his difficulties for himself, in his own way, carrying out his own ideas. This can be done in clay work when pots are made without a wheel. It can be done in lino-cutting, too, when the children are allowed to experiment, and in pattern making when all the repetition is done freehand. To teach a child an elaborate technique first is less educative. Taking the school as a whole, we aim at a compromise between entirely primitive methods and purely professional procedure which usually requires much more expensive apparatus. In weaving, little children can experiment on cardboard looms or improvised apparatus, but gradually they learn more correct processes. The same thing occurs in other crafts. Time and energy are saved if the teacher knows the proper way to do things. But it will sometimes happen that the teacher does not know the proper way or cannot get the materials used elsewhere. He will then have to experiment, as men have done all through history. In India we have to try out different crafts and different ways of doing them and find out which are best suited to our schools. These may be the same or different from those done in Western schools or we may find some modification of the local way of carrying on a craft.

Art crafts will appeal to children who are not good at original picture making and they are a valuable training for all. A different kind of skill is called for when we work with recalcitrant material or make a design to apply on a specific article. Much patience and persistence and control of hand are needed, for instance, to mould clay properly, to model in cardboard or to construct satisfactory costumes for plays. Success and failure here do not depend on any arbitrary mark from the teacher; poor work brings its own punishment. Badly made pots break,



garments do not fit, unevenly cut lino-blocks fail to show a complete print. Our pupils thus experience the discipline of real things, as men do in the outside world, instead of dealing with mere theories as so often in school. There is also scope for care and self-control in preserving what has been made until it is dried or set and in keeping it so that it does not get spoilt and broken by careless hands.

In this book various art crafts are mentioned and some are described briefly, but fuller instructions may be found in the books to which reference is made in the footnotes and which will all be found listed in Appendix 1 on pp. 147-51.

## CREATIVE HANDWORK IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

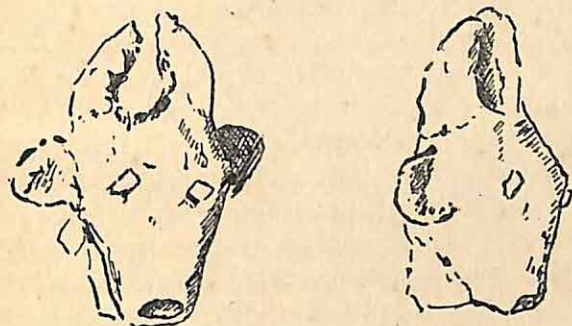
WE know that children love to play imaginative games. They make play houses and gardens, set out shops, arrange dolls' weddings, play at cooking and serving meals. They use their imagination and manipulate any available material in order to carry out their ideas. This is one of the chief means by which they prepare themselves to understand life and learn the properties of the things they handle. In our educational work, we ought to use this habit of constructive play far more than we do. Children should do their arithmetic through shopping games, and act or make models of historical and religious stories. At the moment, however, we are concerned with the use of their imagination in making things with their hands.

The years from four to ten ought to be the great period for handwork and this subject frequently appears on the time-table. Where children can afford it, there should be no difficulty in supplying as much paper, cardboard or plasticine as they need to undertake some of the crafts mentioned later in this book. In most elementary schools, however, the amount that can be spent is very little indeed and 40 children working two or three times a week use up a large amount of material. Yet they ought to have it, if they are to do handwork as it is set down on the time-table. It is the chance to handle and work with material *constantly* that is educational; just to do a little sometimes to put in the school museum is of small value. We therefore need to explore every possibility of using material that costs nothing or is very cheap. (To avoid an unnecessary accumulation of products, the usual practice should be to break up clay work when the class is over and let children take other products home. Only an occasional good piece of work should be kept for show.)

One thing that can be done is to let the children go into the compound and make gardens in the earth, arranging leaves, flowers, sticks and stones. This is a popular occupation in the



lowest class. In the higher classes the children can make more elaborate models, introducing paper models of houses and people and trees, clay models of wells and shrines, to make a complete village. In connexion with history and geography also, they can make models out of doors. They can show mountains and rivers, desert scenes with tents and an oasis, forest scenes with monkeys and wild beasts made of paper. The artistic benefit of such work is the chance it gives for arrangement and manipulation. As many children as possible should take part, perhaps divided into small groups, each making a model, so that they all have a chance to do something active. Quite a lot of care is needed to make objects stand up in the sand and to arrange them suitably.



Figs. 39 and 39 (a). Model of cow's head in country clay by boy of 8 ; size 3" high.

Modelling in clay, or some similar material, is particularly suited to children of this age. Use local country clay or potter's clay mixed with sand. This costs nothing. Children usually begin by making pots and pans, fireplaces with cooking pots on them, fruits, etc. At first they will be crudely made and the whole class will tend to make the same thing. This is the moment for the teacher to help. He may suggest that they should make a man or a cart, a baby in a cradle, a snake or a sheep, a market with fruit-stalls, or food for a feast. Some children will make an object with slight attempt at shaping though their imagination will lend it various qualities; but other clever children produce most interesting models. There may be a mother with her baby, a motor car or bandy with wheels stuck on with bits of stick. Some may make a camel or a cow

drinking, others a well with a bucket, a house, or people in a boat. The class's interest is enormous and small fingers are kept busy. In the primary school more imaginative work is sometimes done in clay than in drawing. (Work with prepared clay is discussed later in Chapter 14.)

Leaves of the palmyra and date palm, fibre from aloe and plantain, are other materials that can be used in the primary school, and it ought to be possible to do original work with them. Children should be encouraged to devise their own models and patterns, not merely do what the teacher says. The teacher should not expect to get very finished work at this stage. That comes later. It is the attempt to carry out an idea and produce some sort of a model that counts.

Coloured paper and cardboard are the materials suggested for much of the artistic handwork described in books by Western writers on the subject. In this country, however, they are often too expensive for common use although newspaper can usually be procured and is useful for making paper boats and hats and cups. It can be torn to the shape of all kinds of objects—trees, leaves, pots, animals and people. Sometimes these can be pasted on to a piece of dark paper. Old handbills and printed coloured paper can also be used in this way.

When children make the usual models in stiff paper of a house, a table, or a boat, etc., their work can be rendered more creative by allowing them to make their own additions, e.g. by sticking on roofs and windows in coloured paper or by applying designs to boxes with scraps of coloured paper or by drawing or painting them. A short time spent in instructing a child in how to make a model should be followed by a long time when the child works on alone, carrying out his own ideas. If he has made a bandy, he can make a bullock to draw it and a stable to hold it—and so on. If he has made furniture, he can make a doll to sit on the chair and books and utensils to put on the table.

In other countries it is sometimes customary to put a period for 'free toymaking' on the time-table. The children bring paper, cardboard boxes, string and scraps of material from home and devise motors and carts and models of various kinds.



Corks and matchboxes, small sticks, bits of wire, all these come in useful. The teacher may supply a few ideas from time to time. This kind of work could well be done in India too. Bandies can be made out of sugar-cane and pith is useful for toy making. Such activity stimulates ingenuity, and the materials required cost nothing.

Lastly, girls in the primary school make a beginning at needlework. This should be so arranged that they find scope for artistic self-expression as well as learning the standard stitches. They can do bold borders or designs, freely, with strong colours in thick thread. Yellow, orange, green, scarlet and blue should be used. They build up their borders as they do painted borders, putting one row of stitches and then another of a different colour, touching or crossing the first. Or they can make *applique* pictures with bits of coloured material stitched on to the main foundation. It is a great pity that they should spend their energies embroidering patterns made by other people or stitching cards with pictures on them. Books on Child Art from other countries give charming examples of original stitched pictures by quite small girls.

## HANDWORK IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

*Work with clay*<sup>1</sup>

As we come to the older children, we shall want something finer than country clay for our modelling. White clay can be bought at about Rs. 4 per cwt from pottery makers, such as Parry and Co.<sup>2</sup> This quantity should last a school for a year. It has to be pounded and ground till it is powdery. A curry roller is a useful implement for this. Mix the powder with water till it is soft enough to mould without cracking but not wet enough to stick to the fingers. Some people recommend mixing it with glycerine so that it will not crack as it dries. It may have to be moistened again during the course of the lesson, but do not let the pupils have free access to the water. They are inclined to work with it when it is of the consistency of mud, but proper modelling cannot be done unless the clay is fairly stiff and dry: only when finishing the surface of pots should it have the consistency of cream, when it is known as 'slip'.

When working with white clay all pupils are inclined at first to make little cooking pots, as the younger children do. They should be encouraged to finish them well and to paint them afterwards. Next they will make figures and these too should be better than those done by the junior school. They may be arranged to illustrate some religious story or historical occasion. Animals, human heads, and comic figures can all be made and painted very effectively with any kind of powder paint or water colour. Figures should be rather massive without protruberances as these are inclined to break off as they dry. In any case some of the figures break in drying but others survive and the best should be kept in the museum. They should not be moved more than necessary as they break very easily if handled carelessly.

At other times the pupils may make exact copies of real objects provided as models, such as conch shells, cotton reels,

<sup>1</sup> See *Modelling* by M. Petrie.

<sup>2</sup> Ranipet, North Arcot District, Madras State.



fruit and other solid objects. If they want to model a thin or long object, it is best first to make a flat base or plinth about

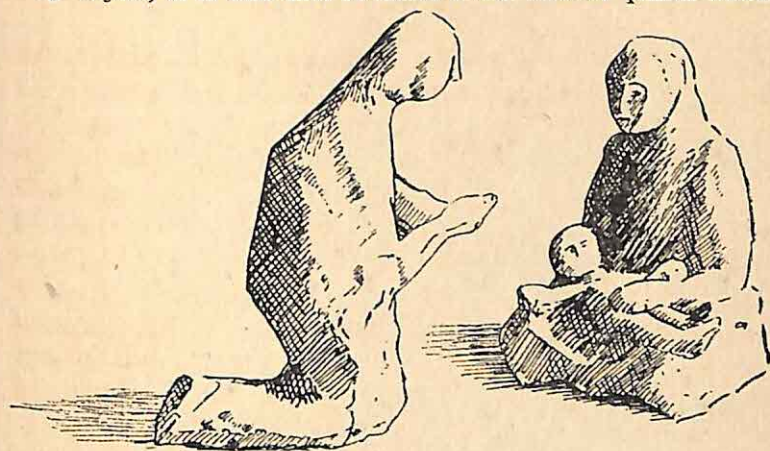


FIG. 40. Modelled and painted nativity group

$\frac{3}{4}$ " thick. An open penknife, beans and pods of various kinds, flattish shells, leaves, seed-vessels, scissors, a half-skinned plantain—all these will make good models. In this type of work the pupil has the discipline of making an exact copy of the object before him. In the former lessons he used his imagination and manipulated his clay in accordance with his own ideas. Both types of lesson are useful. Thirdly he may make his little plaque and on it put a design or small picture. A dancing Siva in low relief is an example that was actually made, and comic faces and figures can also be done in relief. These are improved with painting. Casts can be made of the models with plaster of paris which is quite hard.

We can then take up the making of pottery by traditional methods. This is quite a different matter from the free making of toy cooking utensils. At first the children can make small vessels about three or four inches high, by the primitive method known as 'coiled pottery'. To do this make a circular flat base, then make a roll of clay and place it round the edge. Place a second and third coil of clay on the first, pressing it well together and smoothing it inside and out. In this way the wall of the pot can be built up, being shaped as desired. The rolls must be rather thick and well pressed down, no spaces being left between them.

It is by no means easy to complete the pot. It is apt to break when nearly finished. When dry, these pots can be elaborately painted with designs and are very attractive.

The use of a potter's wheel and the making of real pottery should be a very good school craft. One school got a small wheel of the variety used locally and invited the potter and family to come and teach them to make pots. He brought clay and the usual materials for firing the pots—cowdung cakes and straw. With his help the pupils made some good pots and fired them in the school compound in the traditional way, building up the pots in a pile and putting the fuel round and on top of them. One of the most interesting features of the occasion was the contact with the local craftsman and his family who were highly amused at the pupils' efforts. The wheel had to be spun by hand like a top, but, unfortunately, after the potter had left them, the children could not manage this. It was a hereditary skill that could not be imitated by amateurs so it would be best for schools to buy a wheel that can be turned by some mechanical means. The same school also visited the potter in his home and studied the way in which the whole family helped with making and marketing the pots. They inquired about prices and sources of raw material. All this helped them to realize the connexion between the clay work they did in class and a traditional craft by which men live.

Clay work is extraordinarily fascinating and satisfying and it is one of the cheapest forms of handwork for a school. It would be excellent if more schools took it up and pursued it to a higher standard than is usually the case.

### *Puppets*<sup>1</sup>

Puppet shows in India are a traditional form of entertainment like the Punch and Judy shows of the West. Puppetry can be carried on in schools. The children make their puppets in the handwork class and then use them in dialogues and plays which they learn or invent. The puppet-holders stand behind a curtain exhibiting the puppets above it for the audience to see, making them gesticulate and speaking for them; or a special

<sup>1</sup>See *Hand Puppets and String Puppets* by W. S. Lanchester, and *Adventures with Puppets* by E. B. Beard.



puppet theatre can be constructed. This proves an excellent method of stimulating self-expression in speech. The puppets almost seem to acquire a personality, like a favourite doll. As examples of what can be achieved, the work of a class of students-teachers may be quoted. They produced a magician, a sanyasi, a king, a veiled lady from Arabia, an English girl with blue eyes, a village headman and a member of the Congress Party in a Gandhi cap. The two last held a spirited conversation on village welfare.

Puppets may be either 'Glove Puppets' or 'String Puppets' but only the former are described here as they are simpler to make and use.

The following method has been tried with success. Model a face in clay, about 3" or 4" long. The features should be exaggerated. When it is dry, cover it with castor oil. Tear some newspaper into little pieces, about 2" x 1". Apply these with paste, one overlapping the other, all over the face to form a mask. The pieces should stick to each other but are prevented from sticking to the clay by the application of the oil. About five layers of paper, one over the other, are required. The last layer should be of rather thin white paper; cartridge or writing paper is too thick and does not mould itself to the shape of the face. Press the paper well into the corners of the eyes and mouth. Allow the whole to dry. Then remove the paper mask from the clay. If it does not come off easily, break the clay or ease it off with a knife. The resulting mask is the face of the puppet.

This has to be fixed on to a neck, the head filled in and a back made for the head. For the neck, take a small roll of cardboard that will fit round the first finger. Wrap a twist of newspaper round the top of it and place it in the mask, first filling in the nose of the mask with paper. If needed, cut away part of the chin of the mask so as to fit it to the cardboard roll. The roll should protrude well below the mask. Fill in with newspaper and then paste strips of paper from the mask round the back of the head. Then paint the face and head in character for the puppet. (The topknot of a sanyasi or the crown of a king should be modelled along with the head and covered with paper so that it is part of the mask.)

Next make a bag of brown material, about 8''  $\times$  12''. Turn this upside down. Make a hole in the top and insert the neck of the puppet. Sew the bag firmly to the neck. Put the hand inside the bag, putting the first finger into the neck and the thumb and little finger into the corners of the bag for the arms. Little shapes can be cut out and stuffed or sewn on to the corners to make very effective 'hands'.



FIG. 41. 'A village headman' and 'A king'. Puppets made by students of 17.

The pupil then dresses the upper part of the puppet in character with bits of material and finds much scope for his ingenuity. The top of a sari and blouse can be suggested, or a cloth thrown over the shoulder, and hats and head-dresses of various kinds attached to the head.



## APPROACH TO COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ART<sup>1</sup>

### *Commercial art*

WRITING and lettering have been considered an art for many centuries, especially in China and Persia. In fact, the pages of books, beautifully written in script and illustrated with small pictures, were the origin of Mogul art and we can still admire the beautiful writing at the side and on the back of their pictures. The Chinese write with a brush, but in India and the West a pen is used. In cities in India it is possible to buy special pens, with either straight or sloping broad nibs of varying thicknesses, suitable for script writing. Indian ink can be used, bought in a bottle or a cake. Books or cards on lettering give the standard forms accepted in English lettering. They show both capitals and small letters. These are developed from certain standard letter forms used in Roman inscriptions and pupils should learn the traditional method of making the letters and keep as close to it as possible. Care is needed to do it the right way, evenly, with good spacing. Books<sup>2</sup> on the subject give plenty of examples and this is a craft that is much practised in English schools.

Lettering<sup>3</sup> appeals to pupils who may not have original artistic gifts. We need to experiment to find the best pens and styles for script writing in the various Indian languages. When pupils have become proficient in lettering, they can write programmes, invitations, headings for charts and exhibits, greetings on cards, or any other notices, large or small, that may be required. The effect of these is very good, if they are well done with a suitable pen and black ink. They are far superior to lettering done with an ordinary brush or pen in

<sup>1</sup> See *Teaching Creative Art in Schools* by R. and A. Eccot (esp. chs. vii and viii).

<sup>2</sup> e.g. Eccot, op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> See *Lettering for Children* by R. Tanner, and *Dryad Standard Alphabet Cards*.

blue ink or coloured paint. For large notices there is also an instrument known as a 'poster pen' that makes letters half or three-quarters of an inch in breadth, and is quick and effective to use.

In one school at least in England, boys spend half their time on art work and yet take their secondary school leaving certificate as well. Specially artistic boys from other schools are drafted to this school. Much of their work leads up to commercial art and they are almost expert by the time they leave. Here and in other schools they learn to become skilful at lettering. They do posters and advertisements and learn lay-out—that is, how to arrange matter effectively for an advertisement or book cover so that it shall hold the attention of the observer. When they do posters they have to consider what colours are harmonious and striking to the eye. They must know something of the processes of reproduction. They have to study the effect of their work from a distance and consider how to catch the eye and attention of the public. They must consider the effect of the whole page—picture, lettering, empty spaces—and make it direct the attention to the point of the poster or notice. In doing this they will need to simplify their work and eliminate unnecessary details. Poster paints are useful in this work, for they give the broad smooth effects that are needed. It is also possible to cut out letters in coloured paper and stick them on to the background to make effective posters.

It is thus clearly within the powers of high school children to achieve a certain measure of success in commercial art. They will then take a greater interest in the style of posters and advertisements they see around them, regarding them with a critical eye. This will provide an interest to all the class and those who are most proficient may proceed to train as commercial artists when they leave school. But whether they do so or not, the subject will teach them something about the difference between good and bad composition and help them to be neat and accurate in what they set out for others to see.

### *Industrial art*

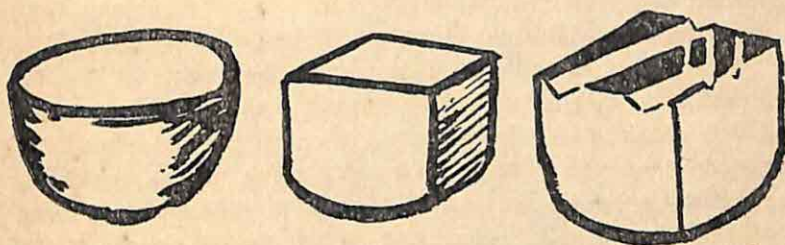
While commercial art deals with posters, advertisements,



lettering and lay-out, industrial art is usually taken to include designs for articles that are going to be manufactured, referring both to their form and their ornamentation. It includes textiles, pottery, wall-paper, carpets, furniture, tools, utensils, book-covers and other articles. In school we are chiefly concerned with designs for fabric printing though sometimes pupils might make designs for pottery. We can let them attempt the simplest forms of block printing, introduce them to indigenous types of handblock printing and describe or show them modern methods of machine printing.<sup>1</sup>

### *Potato-block printing*

Take a potato or a tapioca root and cut it across [Fig. 42(a)]. The potato or root may be used as it then is, or its sides cut down so that a square area is left for making the print [Fig. 42(b)]. The area should be cut smoothly or a clear print will not result. Now cut away some parts of the surface that is going to do the printing, either with a knife or with a lino-cutting tool [Fig. 42(c)].



FIGS. 42 (a), 42 (b) and 42 (c). Three stages in making a potato block.

When we come to make the print, the uncut portions will leave an impression on the paper and the part cut away will leave a blank and so we get our pattern. A little experimenting will show what effects can be produced. It is more pleasing if the pattern cut on the block is not symmetrical. Then, when printing, a symmetrical and new design can be produced by turning the block in different directions.

Suitable 'ink' for printing from potato or tapioca blocks can be made from ordinary water colour or powder colour,

<sup>1</sup>See *Children's Work in Block Printing* by R. Tanner; *The Teaching of Art in Schools* by E. Gibbs, esp. chs. vii and viii; Eccot, op. cit., esp. ch.v; Dryad Leaflet 106: *Linoleum Cutting and Printing*.

but, of course, there is no need to use up the best paint-box colours. The exact tint does not matter so this is an occasion when indigo, red ochre, black, or some strong colour that is cheap can be used. The paint can either be smeared on to the block with a paint brush or the block can be pressed on to a little pad of felt or blotting paper placed in a saucer and well soaked with paint. In both methods a fresh application of paint must be made between each print or the tone will not be even. A few practice prints should be made on scrap paper to see how much paint is needed before printing on the final paper.

The paper used for block printing should be slightly absorbent. Cream laid will not do because it has a slight 'finish', but cartridge paper and cheap unbleached paper (badami) do very well. If a strong, dark paper is used, brown or blue, the final prints make useful covers for books, notebooks, folders and other objects. A pleasant effect can be obtained with white paint on dark paper but, unfortunately, it does not wear well so should not be used for book covers.

Most of the same types of design can be made with potato blocks as are referred to under painted designs (ch. 8), but the result is obtained so much more quickly that large areas are soon printed. Border patterns or all-over patterns, simple repetition, repetition in which the unit is turned in different directions and the 'drop repeat' pattern can all be effectively used. Care is needed to get the repetitions in straight lines and to get the paint uniform in tone. Almost any cuts on a block will give a pattern. The pattern should be rather bold; lines, oval shapes, or cut-away areas can be combined.

To obtain a pattern in two colours, a second potato block must be cut. Prints, or patterns, in two or more colours can be obtained by cutting extra blocks for each colour. These are printed over the first block and a very effective result obtained. Care and skill are necessary to fit the parts of a coloured pattern together.

Children under ten can do this work, but its chief value is for those adolescents who are growing tired of painting. The work demands a good deal of care, accuracy and perseverance. The printed blocks make such attractive book covers and



endpapers that this art craft can be combined with book-binding.

Potato blocks will not keep beyond the day on which they are cut, as they dry up.

### *Lino-block printing*

Woodblock printing is an old method of reproduction, well known in India, China, and other Eastern countries. Of recent years something of a similar nature has been tried for school children. Linoleum, or lino, largely used for covering floors in the West, has proved a suitable medium. Designs are easily cut on it and yet it is permanent and can be used for a great many prints. Children worked with penknives at first until special tools were invented. The most useful are the gouge and the V-tool.<sup>1</sup>



FIG. 43. Lino cut, suitable for fabric printing, by girl of 17; size  $2\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3''$ .

Lino is obtainable from some of the larger furnishing shops in cities and from Laha and Co. It is bought by the yard and must then be cut up for the pupils into pieces about  $2'' \times 3''$ . This is a convenient size for a block for fabric printing and its cost works out at about three annas.

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes obtainable from S. K. Laha & Co., 1, Dharamtala Street, Calcutta.

Each pupil takes his small piece and roughly draws a simple design on it in pencil. He soon finds by experience that he cannot draw too minute a pattern. Each line cut with the

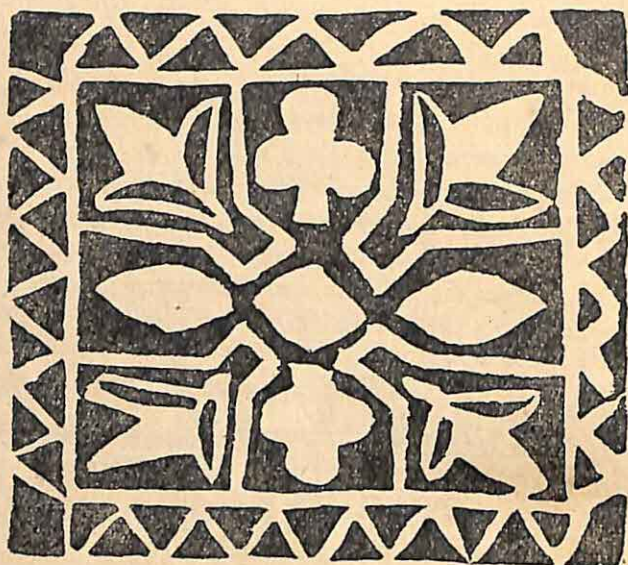


FIG. 44. Another lino cut suitable for fabric printing, by girl of 17 ;  
size  $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3$ ".

tool must have some breadth and depth if it is to be effective when printed. At first children often make mere scratches and have to be shown how to make bolder, deeper cuts. Some are very quick at learning to use the tools effectively. They tend to do everything in outline and must be shown the method of cutting away part of the surface so that a white mass may appear in the finished work. They should learn to 'peck' or stripe or cross-hatch part of the surface, to produce a tone that is neither wholly white nor wholly black. Let them print their patterns without much correction and thus learn by experience how to get a desired effect. This they cannot do until they have some experience of the ways of lino for it is different from anything they have used so far. The lino should control their work, so it is not wise to draw an elaborate design first and transfer it on to the block. The experienced craftsman will do this, for he is thinking all the time in terms of what the lino will do; but the beginner is not and should therefore work direct.



The V-tool is used for making lines and will also produce the 'pecked' effect. The gouge is mainly used to cut away unwanted areas but can make oval spots that are effective when

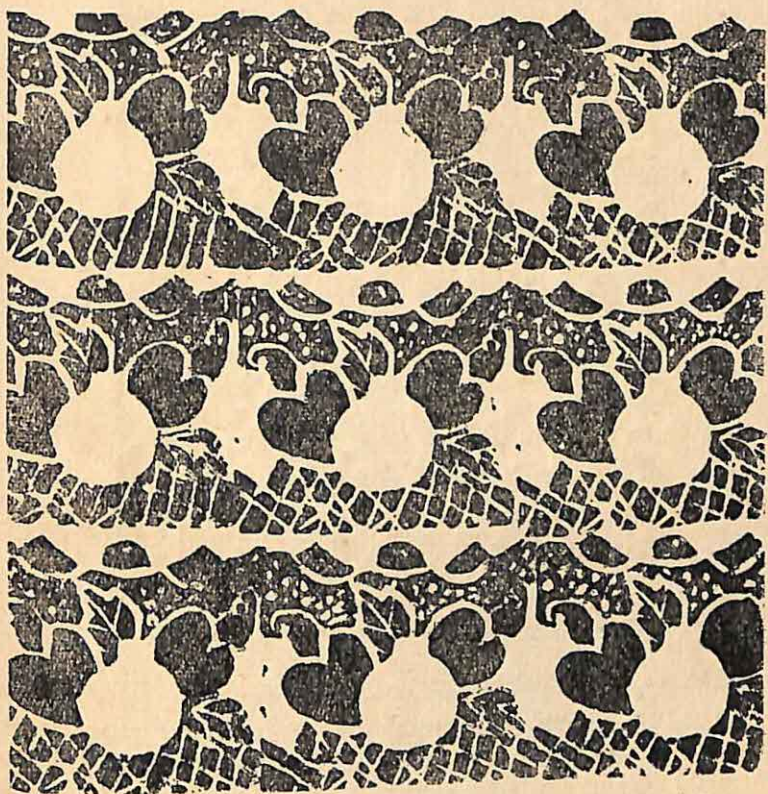


FIG. 45. Lino cut repeated to make all-over pattern, by girl of 17;  
size 9" x 7½"

printed. The teacher should consult the books referred to in the footnote on p. 111 for details of methods, but will find that he probably learns more in two practical lessons than from any amount of written description.

Printer's ink can be used for taking prints. As it is sticky, it is the right consistency for applying to lino. Tubes of water-colour medium for this work are sold in India but they do not give such a clear effect unless applied in the right consistency on very absorbent paper. Unfortunately the waterproof medium used for much of the beautiful fabric printing illustrated in

the books on the subject does not seem to be available in India.



FIG. 46. 'A dancer.' Lino cut by Dunham, aged 17 ; size  $2\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3''$ .

The first attempts at printing may be tried on newspaper or fairly rough white or buff paper. Spread some ink on a sheet of glass or smooth paper and roll until it is spread evenly on the roller. Apply the roller to the block till that is inked evenly all over. The block should then be placed carefully in position where the print is desired and pressure applied on the back with a spoon or other blunt instrument. If a lino-block is nailed to a piece of plywood, prints can be made easily. To produce an all-over design the prints can be arranged evenly on the paper to cover the whole surface. They may be placed edge to edge or a margin left between them. Sometimes a 'drop repeat' or a reverse arrangement is pleasing. Various arrangements can be tried out on rough paper. Pupils will discover by experience how to get a perfect print.

Girls always want to proceed to fabric printing so that they



can print their own blouses or table cloths and there can be no doubt that the prints are more effective on fabric than on paper. The following method can be used but it will not stand washing. Take some bazaar colour, grind it well and mix a little, on a piece of glass or a tile, with linseed oil and a few drops of turpentine. Cover it with a piece of silk and you have the equivalent of the pad used for potato-block printing. When the lino is pressed on the silk, the ink comes through evenly and a clear print is obtained. If dye were used instead of bazaar powder, or the printed cloth dipped in vinegar to fix it, a washable print might result. Local woodblock printers use a washable chemical preparation that has to be fixed with a bath of acid, but this is so liquid that it will not give a clear print with a lino block. Experiment is still needed to adapt the commercial process to school use. It might be possible to thicken the dye with starch.

The lino work so far described demands care, besides giving scope for good pattern making, and is within the powers of all the pupils in a class over twelve years of age. It cannot easily be taught to more than twenty at a time, however, so in a class of forty, only half should attempt it in one lesson.

Besides teaching children the varying results of repeating units and the difference between good and bad patterns, lino is also used for making single pictures. A larger piece of the material is usually necessary for this and gives great scope to the more artistic children as it is a recognized medium of black and white work. Such pictures are conventional decorations, not realistic representations, and the distribution of black, white and shading is controlled by the demands of the design rather than the realities of light and shade (Fig. 46). Examples of children's lino pictures are given in all the books referred to in the footnote on p. 111.

Schoolchildren should largely be left to work out their own technique, not worried to conform to the elaborate methods of the art school suitable for professional work. Only the artistic children will have any real success in picture making; the others may attempt it, but will do better with pattern work.

Once a picture has been cut, numerous prints can be taken. Tissue paper is suitable for this purpose, the paper placed on the

block and pressed till an even impression is obtained on every part.



FIG. 47. 'A dancer'. Lino cut by girl of 18 ; size  $2\frac{1}{4}'' \times 3''$ .



## SOME FURTHER POSSIBILITIES

### *Making murals*

ATTEMPTS are sometimes made nowadays to paint murals or frescoes, that is paintings on walls, reviving the old Indian tradition. While in some places this is done by art school students in a professional manner, it is also possible to attempt something much simpler and cheaper that can be done by older boys and girls and by teachers in training. Striking results have been obtained by pupils painting directly on to a white-washed wall with powder paint.

The work should only be done by pupils who are fairly proficient at figure drawing. This does not mean that they should be correct in proportion, but the young artist should be capable of free, bold work that has a decorative quality. If it shows traces of primitive methods of drawing figures, this is so much the better, for it will resemble the traditional wall-paintings found on the walls of temples, shrines and palaces. We shall very likely get figures in profile with boat-shaped eyes, somewhat stylized in treatment.

A subject should be chosen that lends itself to group treatment and allows scope to the imagination of the class. Subjects that have actually been carried out are 'Women cooking', 'Scene on the road', 'Street sellers', 'Cultivating paddy', while some good sketches were made for 'On the way to school' though this mural was not carried out.

From five to twelve students worked on one mural or set of pictures. Working on a long blackboard or in their notebooks, it was possible to see how the work of different students fitted together. If they did the preliminary work in their notebooks, each did one figure. It was found best to eliminate objects in the background and only show the figures and any trees, vehicles or cooking pots, etc., connected with them. The background should either be left plain or covered with a pale colour. The ground, too, is best treated lightly and allowed to fade away into the white wall.

Pupils are shown the space to be filled and asked to sketch their portion with charcoal which is easily rubbed out. The teacher should set the lower limit to the work and watch the development of the whole. He may suggest the arrangement of figures so as to fill up blank spaces and he should take care that they are all approximately on the same scale. In general, however, the work should be left to the pupils.



FIG. 48. 'Women working in the home.' Students of Gnanodhaya Training School painting murals on their staircase wall. (From a photo by the *Mail*, Madras.)

As they proceed, they will influence each other and the work will grow in unity. The weaker artists will learn from the better. The effect will be spontaneous and the design will develop as it proceeds. Of course it will not have the artistic effect of professional work, but it will have a vitality of its own and both teacher and pupils will learn from their efforts at what is, after all, an entirely new type of work for schools.

In the first mural paintings undertaken by the pupils whose work has just been mentioned, the figures were only about two



feet high. A later group of students produced larger figures, as much as four feet in height.

For painting these murals powder paint is best, though any kind of water colour or poster paint can be used. The traditional Indian range of colours gives good effects: scarlet or dull red, strong blue, yellow, olive green, brown and black. Other colours should be used sparingly. In Indian wall paintings, the flesh is usually painted with yellow ochre or dull red. Pupils find difficulty in mixing a suitable tint and sometimes produce a muddy grey or a bright pink. The teacher may therefore help by mixing a suitable shade of golden brown which all can use (unless, of course, they particularly want something darker or lighter). In painting a light colour, a good deal of white should be mixed with the paint. Paint should not be applied in a watery mixture as this does not give an even tone. Plenty of white should also be used when making a grey to paint, e.g., stone cooking vessels, or they will appear too dark and prominent in the design. White stripes or jewels can be added with thick paint on top of what has already been done. White with a touch of yellow gives a satisfactory representation of gold.

Large and small brushes should be used for different parts of the work. It is difficult to paint well on a vertical wall and if a large brush full of paint is employed, the paint runs down the wall in a stream. Pupils soon learn how to manage the paint, but this is one reason why small brushes are safer even though the space to be covered may be large. Bazaar colours should be ground up and mixed with gum, as for other types of painting. Some murals have lasted for three years with only a little touching up.

The results obtained have surprised both teacher and class. When they were at work the pupils were eager to continue and would have gone on for hours. It takes about an hour for each to draw his portion and several hours to paint it, but the pupils proceed without hesitation and the work develops and changes very rapidly. The result arouses great interest in surrounding schools.

It is hoped that student-teachers will carry on such work on the walls of the schools to which they go as teachers after their training.

*Needlecraft and art in the home*<sup>1</sup>

The needlework taught in Indian schools should be made more educative and adapted better to Indian life.

Girls should learn to draft and cut out and design Indian garments as well as to sew them; and if they sometimes make them first for dolls, they will gain an idea of the construction of garments of various kinds without using much material or spending much time over each garment. Care should be taken over choice of colour and material.

The ornamentation of the garments and other objects made should give the girls a chance to invent and carry out their own designs. It is a very bad practice to depend on ready-made patterns and ornamentation of a Western type. They need to understand why garments are made in a certain way, not merely to accept a given pattern. The study of costumes of other times and other countries and provinces is profitable and makes for a more intelligent approach to needlework.

The whole matter of embroidery and fancy work needs to be taken up and developed on lines that are indigenous and artistic. Much energy is wasted at present on making ugly, poor and useless articles.

Girls will be interested in other handicrafts, as well as in needlework, as a means of making articles to beautify the home. Cushion-covers and curtains can be printed with lino-blocks. Wooden stools can be painted. Pottery can be painted with enamel or powder paint to make most effective ornaments. Screens can be designed of various materials. They also like to paint dress designs and designs for fabrics, whether they ever carry them out or not.

Some idea of colour schemes and methods of interior decoration can be given and girls can study the furnishing of rooms suitable for modern Indian requirements. This subject is included in some schemes for Home Science and the Lady Irwin College at Delhi has made interesting practical experiments in the interior decoration of Indian homes.

*Various other crafts*

There are numerous other art crafts suitable for secondary

<sup>1</sup>See *Needlework in Education* by T. Graham.



schools. Books abound on the subjects listed here and reference should be made to the one or two on each subject given in Appendix 1. Some can be carried out as suggested in these books; for others we need to substitute Indian materials or adapt them in various ways to Indian requirements.

*Doll making*<sup>1</sup> is a popular occupation and not difficult. Dolls could be made and dressed in costumes of different states or countries or periods in correlation with History and Geography.

*Soft toy making*<sup>2</sup> can be adapted to Indian conditions.

*Papier mache* is already an Indian handicraft and can be practised in schools according to directions given in other books. It gives scope for originality in the models chosen.

*Fibre and cane work*.<sup>4</sup> Many Western books describe interesting work with raffia or cane. Here in India we can use plantain fibre and aloe fibre in much the same way. Palmyra and date palm leaves are also useful and basketry with palmyra leaves has many possibilities. The traditional cane work done in some towns is suitable for schools. These types of handwork all offer scope for originality in dyeing and using materials as well as for good craftsmanship in the actual making of articles.

*Carving and whittling*. It is possible to do carving on blocks of plaster of paris, on soft wood or in pith. This has been recently developed in some schools in the West and is done in one or two schools in India. Even the root of the tapioca can be carved to look like ivory though the product dries up in a day or two.

These are only some of many crafts that can be practised.

<sup>1</sup>See Dryad Leaflet 123: *Doll Making with the Professional Touch*; and *I Made my own Dolls* by T. Stowell.

<sup>2</sup>See *Dressed Soft Toys* by L. Moody, and *Making Soft Toys* by C. E. Edlmann.

<sup>3</sup>See Dryad Leaflet 93: *Making Papier Mache*.

<sup>4</sup>See *Canework* by C. Crampton, and *Raffia Work and Basketry* by J. H. Crampton.

Part IV  
APPRECIATION OF ART  
&  
TEACHER TRAINING



## TEACHING APPRECIATION OF ART

THE aim of our art work should not be merely to teach pupils to draw and paint and model. We want to help them to appreciate good art, whether ancient or modern. This is a new subject in schools and we do not yet know all the best ways of doing it. It is certain, though, that we cannot do much good by directly telling children what to admire and what to condemn. We should approach the subject in a more indirect way and, while teaching what is likely to interest schoolchildren, gradually build up a standard of taste as we lead them to study and understand and appreciate the art of different ages.

### *Non-representational art*

There are two main lines of approach. We can either deal with beauty in the form and colour and ornamentation of objects or we can ask why and how people have made representations of people and things in the past.

From Mohenjodaro and many other ancient sites, prehistoric objects, weapons, vessels, ornaments and utensils have been unearthed. In the history lesson, we can turn to pictures of these things to tell us what they can of life in prehistoric times. We should also point out to our pupils the beauty of form and ornamentation that they show. Right through the ages up to modern times we have examples of pots and vases, objects of daily use and adornment. We may ask ourselves, 'Which can be considered beautiful and which cannot?' In some cases there is perfection of workmanship and shape. Others are over-ornate and ugly. Usually, hand-made objects produced by old craftsmen were fine and well-proportioned, the form dependent on the material. Nowadays there are quantities of cheap, machine-made goods, often lacking all the elements of good taste. When goods are simple, suitable for their purpose, well-proportioned and ornamented in a way that is natural to the material of which they are made, they have dignity and beauty. When they are artificially modelled to look like something else, ornamented in a self-conscious way that seems to



try to show off the skill of the workman, they are often tiresome and ugly. Children and young people need to be taught to look for these things and they will learn what to appreciate in their own homes.

India is rich in traditional textile designs, brass and silver ware, carved doorways and fine pottery. A little instruction and guided study of these things will be of interest to pupils, stimulating their appreciation of indigenous products and helping to develop their taste.

### *Pictures and sculpture*

We can follow the history of pictorial art and its various purposes. Leaving aside the merit of the work, we can interest children in how and why, throughout the centuries, men have made models and pictures. There are the paintings on the walls of caves, drawn by prehistoric men, early carved and modelled figures, pictures painted on pots. In each case, the material used determined the character of the representation. We must lead children to understand that a representation is not primarily something made with pencil or paint on paper. Artists have had an age-long struggle with their medium. Good art is that which uses the medium in a suitable way. This can well be seen in the stone figures of lions and elephants and bulls so common among ancient Indian monuments. They show the massive strength and dignity of the beasts—qualities that can be suitably portrayed in stone—but not every detail of muscle or hide. Children may not at first appreciate the artistry of objects from prehistoric diggings, for they are sometimes broken, discoloured and lacking in finish. They have to be taught to see the life-like qualities in them and the grace of form in the figures. Otherwise they are likely to prefer commonplace modern china because it is coloured and glazed and complete, though it may be quite vulgar. We must arouse their interest in ancient finds by telling of their history, the way they were made and their great age.

### *Religious art*

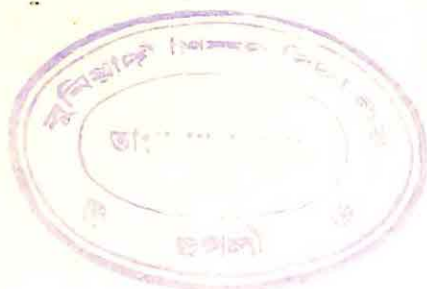
Much of the skill of Indian artists, and that of other ancient peoples, has been expended on religious subjects. The aim here has been to stimulate worship, to portray the traditional





# ‘AN ACCIDENT’

Crayon drawing by boy, aged 6, of New Era School, Bombay;  
size, 7" x 7". Pupil of Sri T. M. Patel.



deities of Hinduism and representations of the Buddha, showing by an appeal to the eye the qualities which inspire fear and reverence. As in other countries, tradition governs the symbols and, to some extent, the form in which they are depicted. Early representations are crude and hardly human. Then come the great ages of sculpture or painting, whose products we still admire, only to be followed, perhaps, by periods when it was considered sufficient to imitate the older work—to provide the accepted symbols without any artistic inspiration.

It is interesting and profitable for children to learn the traditional poses, symbols and purposes behind representations of Siva, Buddha and others. Hindus, of course, will be so familiar with them that they will not need explanations, but others will. Children are keen to learn and recognize the traditional symbols and vehicles of the different gods—the conch, the discus, the mace, the bull, the lion and the peacock. It is worth noticing how an artist can keep to the traditional symbols and yet vary his arrangement of the figure. In some cases the same scene is shown again and again, now forming a majestic and inspiring whole, now a mere travesty of an earlier masterpiece. Looking for these points, the pupil will follow the intention of the artist and accept the six arms of a statue as symbols of varying aspects of its power. He will become used to them and will not call them unnatural and impossible as the modern uninstructed person does.

Hindu children will accept the traditional representation of the gods without question, but they will question the traditional representation of the human figure. They should be told something of the symbolism of the various features—the lotus eye, the long hands, for instance—until gradually they come to accept the conventions of Indian art. Unless this happens, they cannot appreciate the art of Ajanta. They may know that it is supposed to be great, but they will think in their hearts that it is peculiar. Somehow we should so familiarize them with Indian art forms and let them understand the purpose and method of the work that they may grow up ready to appreciate its artistic merits, neither estranged from nor enamoured of work because of its style.

We should remember that until the present day, when photo-



graphs and coloured reproductions widened knowledge of the art of all times, people were used to one traditional art form which they accepted without question and within which they assessed both its merits and faults. Nowadays with the art of the world reproduced in books, we need to soak ourselves in the art of one age or country for some time, in order to appreciate it properly, and only then, at a later period can we pay attention to some other art tradition. To flit from one style to another produces something like æsthetic indigestion. Although, in this book, we are concerned with teaching Indian art forms to Indian children, the modern world is so filled with different types of pictures that we need to take pains to show and explain typical Indian work if we want our pupils to appreciate it.

### *The Ajanta frescoes*

Ajanta provides one of the most marvellous examples of art in India or, indeed, in the world, and one which cannot fail to interest the Indian child. The teacher can deal with the subject from several different angles. First he can tell the children the story of the colony of Buddhist monks established in the caves on the side of the lonely wooded valley, living their lives of austerity and contemplation during the rainy season, and wandering as beggars during the hot season. In the second place, children will learn the story of the life of the Buddha and so understand the subjects of the frescoes.

There is a stage in a child's development when the story of the method of painting will interest him more than the artistic merit of the work. Children are fascinated to learn how things are done and no small part of the history of art is the development of the tools and materials with which it has been achieved. The teacher should therefore describe the painting of the Ajanta pictures—how some men drew great cartoons of a size to fit the place they were to occupy on the walls of the caves while others ground and mixed the colours for the work. Still others would be engaged in covering the walls with a rough cement made of gravel and little stones and then spreading over this the fine surface needed for the painting. They pricked holes along the lines of the cartoon and then



held it against the wall and pressed dark powder through to give the necessary outline for the painting, doing just so much at a time as could be finished in a day. Then came the actual painting, including the painting of the ceiling which must have been a difficult task. And so these great frescoes were completed, covering the walls of the dark caves with enormous pictures that have a grace and appeal and suitability to their location that make them one of the marvels of the world.

It is remarkable how these pictures have remained all these centuries on the walls of dark caves, forgotten for ages and only rediscovered about a hundred years ago. Their partially destroyed condition is due to damp and neglect and to wrong treatment after they were rediscovered. We should show children copies of those portions that are least damaged, or imaginary reconstructions of the paintings, if they are to appreciate them, for, as with objects from ancient diggings, they do not like a picture or a statue that is spoilt or broken. Indeed, when adults admire mutilated works of art, they presumably achieve considerable feats of imaginary reconstruction which a child cannot be expected to do automatically when faced with an Ajanta fresco or the Venus of Milo.

Most important of all, we must study the paintings as works of art. They were clearly the work of people who had a long tradition of fresco painting; we know, in fact, that many contemporary palaces, temples and houses were covered with paintings which have perished with the buildings. The artists had been doing this sort of thing for so long that they adopted conventions for the representation of arms, legs, hands, eyes. They did not aim at making a realistic picture; they wished, by the rhythm of line, the gesture of a hand or the pose of a head, to convey a feeling of wonder or surprise, to give pleasure and a sense of balance and peace, of adoration or joy. The drawing of the limbs, the addition of clothing and jewellery, the arrangement of the figures and their colouring all contribute to this.

Pupils should gradually and unconsciously come to appreciate these things, but we cannot expect this to happen without some understanding of the circumstances of their origin and some familiarity with these old masterpieces. Only when we



get them away from the cheap modern coloured illustrations in magazines and from popular commercialized art will they have a chance to appreciate real art.

### *Mogul paintings*

Mogul paintings give another example of representational art. We can very easily correlate this study with the history lesson. Babar and Humayun, in the course of their wanderings, spent time at the court of Persia and it was here that Humayun studied painting. Persian painting is very wonderful and was brought to India by the Moguls when they came to power. It united in influence with native Indian art. We know the story of how Akbar started a school of art at Fatehpur Sikri, in which he took a personal interest and gave rewards to artists. At this point in our study we can have a discussion on the encouragement of art in its historical setting: how artists flourished when there were patrons willing to pay for first-rate work and how art degenerated when people preferred quantities of cheap work of lesser merit. This happened in India from the time of Jehangir. The method and purpose of this art and its subject matter can be contrasted with the art of Ajanta.

Persian and Mogul artists were the first to work on paper in India and their purpose was to illustrate books. They were making records of historical events and were interested in preserving likenesses of persons. So they painted durbars, hunting scenes or portraits of Mogul emperors and their courtiers. Artists were clever at drawing quick sketches of people and incorporating them in their pictures. Often we can recognize the individuals and thus watch, say, the development of Shah Jehan from the youthful Prince Salim to the time he became a middle-aged emperor and then an old man. There is one picture of a crowd of courtiers in which two or three dozen figures are numbered and their names supplied, proving that each was intended as a portrait of a real character. This combination of portrait likeness with imaginative composition is a characteristic feature of Mogul art.

Pupils will be interested in all the detail of Mogul pictures and as it is not difficult or expensive to get books of reproductions, both in colour and black and white, they can study the court



costumes and buildings of those days. Where the Indian influence is greater than the Persian, we get interesting little scenes of Indian life—landscapes and groups of people at work. We see men hunting deer by lamplight at night, emperors visiting holy men in the forest, holy men in groups under trees, emperors hunting or laying out gardens or fighting. One very lively scene shows Akbar crossing a river on a bridge of boats and attacking a town with elephants. Other artists have specialized in making detailed paintings of birds and flowers. A study of such pictures can make the Mogul age 'live' for the children—history explaining art and art illustrating history.

#### *The study of architecture*

Children may well make a study of local architecture, either the Dravidian styles of Tamilnad or those showing Indo-Saracenic influence as we travel farther north. This again can be closely correlated with local history. An additional advantage here is that boys can sketch examples of style and ornament direct from the shrines and ruins around them, for which their collector's instinct may be utilized even though their æsthetic feelings are slight. As numerous books deal with the different styles of Indian architecture, this extremely important side of Indian art will not be further enlarged upon here.

#### *Sources for picture study*

A word more should be added about materials for this study. Until some portfolios of reproductions and photographs are available for schools, it is hard to find illustrations for teaching art appreciation. Keen teachers will make personal collections of coloured reproductions from any sources they can find. In this connexion, reference may be made to the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, the *Modern Review*, illustrated annuals and magazines such as *Marg* and *Silpi*, all of which often contain reproductions that are worth framing or displaying on a board. Books on Mogul art are to be found in reference libraries and might sometimes be bought for school libraries. Excellent reproductions of the Ajanta frescoes have been published<sup>1</sup> and are obtainable in some libraries if specially asked for. Postcard reproductions of Mogul paintings can be obtained

<sup>1</sup> G. Yazdani, *Ajanta*, Text and Parts I-IV (Oxford)



from the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, and from the South Kensington Museum, London (which also sells postcard reproductions of Indian textiles and embroidery). These are quite cheap.

### *The student age*

When young people pass from school to college, many show an interest in art. Under present conditions, this taste is uninstructed. Some even ask: 'What is the purpose of art, now that coloured photography has been invented?' Others admire nothing but the most sentimental coloured prints in Western style while a few patriotically prefer anything in an Oriental style, whether it is well or badly done. They visit local art exhibitions, but do not know how to appreciate the pictures. They tend to consider a picture merely from the point of view of the subject and its literal likeness to the object drawn; or, while dimly conscious that there is merit in works in Indian style, they need to be told how to appreciate them. They do not know how to discriminate between a work of originality and one which is an imitation of the work of other artists. Those who had followed some such course as is suggested in this chapter would at least be familiar with the landmarks in Indian art. They would have pegs on which to hang their further experience of pictures, a beginning from which to advance. From their previous study they would recognize familiar styles with pleasure, they would be ready to compare the modern Tagore school with old Indian art; the Asutosh Museum of Indian Art at Calcutta or the Sri Chitralayam at Trivandrum would then be fruitful for them to study. Above all, those who have tried to paint and draw and print pictures themselves would be ready to appreciate the work of professional artists and enter into the artistic heritage of their land.

In the next chapter, some attempt is made to indicate the difference between great art and less good art and to show how we may learn to appreciate the best.

## WHAT IS GOOD ART ?

How can we train ourselves to judge what is a good picture and what is not? Is it enough to like a picture? What makes us like it? Why does not the artist always paint the pictures that we like most easily?

If we look back at the history of art, we may gain some idea of the answers to these questions. Long ago men made things in a certain way because it expressed what they wanted to express. The man who painted a devil mask made his idea of a fiercesome demon. The man who painted Buddha painted him in the traditional position and gave him the usual features and yet made him noble and tranquil. When people painted a hunting scene, they did their best to depict the fleet quarry and the active hunters. The man painting an Egyptian princess somehow gave us the portrait of a real woman. Each did what he felt he wanted to do as well as he could and each worked in the tradition of his own day. So the artists of Ajanta painted women as everyone saw them painted in those days, with very narrow waists and long beautiful fingers, and yet they made them alive. When we look at the art of a people, we must look at it with their eyes. We must realize what they expect to see in a picture. Chinese art gives us a surprise at first, for it is so different from Indian or Western art. Yet the Chinese artist paints with all his soul and paints the trees, birds, and figures that seem just right to him. Similarly children paint what seems right in their eyes and we must learn to appreciate Child Art or the art of other times, and not condemn it because it is not what we are used to. To ask 'Why did the artist paint thus?' is the first step in art criticism.

Another step is to take what people call a masterpiece and compare it with other work in the same style. Gradually, as we look at it, we begin to see its merits. We see the harmony of the artist's conception. We see that he is trying to express one thing and that every part of the work contributes towards it. Think of the dignity and beauty of the



great Bodhisatva with the blue lotus at Ajanta. The lines of the figure, the downcast look of the eyes, the ornamentation of the head-dress and the simplicity of the flesh tints all lend themselves to the central conception. The surrounding figures contribute to the effect, drawing our eyes to the central figure whence they are again drawn down by the gaze to the lotus and then back again to survey the whole figure.

We must respect the work of any artist who puts his whole soul into it and does his very best. Compare the figure of the sleeping Vishnu in a cave high up on the hill at Mahabalipuram (often seen in photographs) with later representations of the same subject. In the earlier, the lines of the figure are massive and gracious, the sleep is profound. The kneeling worshippers express real devotion and the flying figures are most harmoniously placed to the right. The whole is balanced and well proportioned; line and mass and space are in harmony. In later temples, one often sees travesties of this subject. Gone is the grace, the harmony, the awe and reverence. The central figure is thin, the flying figures are fat and ugly, the snakes' heads are too prominent and the worshippers are squashed in, just because they have to be there. The original carving was the creation of an artist moved by a great idea who placed it in a setting fit for the subject—the hill above the sea with the sun blazing down on the foliage around. Later it became a mere symbol, repeated to order in temples by workmen who were paid to execute a representation of the subject to attract the gaze of worshippers.

Whether we look at Durga fighting the demon or at the great façade on the rock known as 'Arjuna's Penance' (both at Mahabalipuram and well-known in photographs), the more we gaze, the more we see the harmony of the conception and the beauty of the treatment. Durga and her helpers all stand upright, while, in contrast, the demon and his fiends are bowing before her at an angle, every line carrying out the idea. The 'Penance' is really a representation of all nature worshipping the Nagas, gods of the stream. Here we see a great assembly—sun, moon, elephants, deer, forest creatures and holy men—all turned towards the fissure in the rock down which a stream once ran. This is a wonderful piece of art, using the natural



face of the rock to make this great panorama of worship. It even includes a cat so busy doing penance that it has no time to notice the mice at its feet! Also at Mahabalipuram is the well-known carving of the cow licking its calf in the scene of Krishna and the Gopis, put in out of sheer love of cows and calves and as clear today as on the day it was executed, some thirteen hundred years ago.

A great artist, then, takes the tradition of his time and works in it. He can indeed begin nowhere else. But he makes it his own; he has something to say and this message controls his use of the means at his disposal, both the materials and the tradition. It is his picture, made that way because his originality dictates how it shall go. Common people at first may not like it, for they think they know exactly how a picture ought to be painted and they do not want anything fresh. By and by, people come to recognize and get used to a great artist's way of doing things and they appreciate his vision. There is something in the way he has made his medium serve his purpose, some sense in which everything in the picture helps to bring out the idea, some unconscious balance of mass and form that makes its appeal. We find originality in the way he has observed and put in charming details—little figures doing things in the distance, graceful lines or paintwork on the figures and draperies. The artist puts these things in because he chooses to have them there, because they suit his subject and he enjoys making his picture lovely. Sometimes what he does is to leave out some of the details that a lesser artist would put in and to show, by simple lines or a few details, what he has to say. Indian artists have been specially gifted in the way they use lines. By these they show the curves of the body, or the folds of drapery in graceful and harmonious ways. They have done this where Western artists have used light and shade.

Many good reproductions of great pictures of the West are available for our study, more in fact than of Indian pictures. We can see the Italian religious pictures, the early ones when the colours are flat and the figures still somewhat stiff, though often very beautiful, and the later ones of Raphael and Leonardo da Vinci, who reached the peak of what can be done in their



particular line. Reproductions can also be bought of the great English pictures—portraits by Gainsborough and landscapes by Turner and Constable. Dutch pictures are famous for their realistic detail, and the work of the French impressionists for its wonderful representation of light and colour. If we try to get good coloured prints of some of these for our schools, we shall gradually come to appreciate what is meant by great art in the West.

## TRAINING ART TEACHERS

*For the primary school*

NEW art methods require teachers with a new outlook. We need teachers whose centre of interest is the child and his development rather than the technique of art. For younger children, the best teacher will be one who understands their nature, who has probably had training in general subjects and is interested in art. It is usual, of course, in primary schools, for the class teacher to take all subjects. Sometimes one teacher in the primary school who is good at art will take it in every class. He must have some appreciation of what self-expression through art may do for a child—of his joy and satisfaction in making pictures, and of the psychological benefit of this satisfaction. Sometimes the unsophisticated elementary teacher will catch this point of view, exclaiming that his children love modelling, and are much interested in making pictures. The good teacher is pleased because the class is happy, whether he knows much of educational theory or not.

By training and experience, the teacher will learn to recognize the various stages through which childish representation passes, knowing what is typically elementary and what is more advanced and sophisticated. It is good that the teacher should appreciate childish drawings as typical of a certain stage of growth ; then he may learn to abandon the old idea of forcing a child to use forms of representation suitable to an adult, but far beyond the stage natural to him. This idea, that the childish vision and way of representation is necessarily different from the adult's, is a point that is hard for the average drawing teacher to grasp.

One of the most useful things that a young teacher can do is to leave the class perfectly free to carry out a subject in its own way and try to pick out and praise the good work that is done.

*Teachers in training schools*

Part of this study of a child's natural way of drawing belongs



to the child-study that every teacher in training should undergo. All teachers of little children should be able to get their class to work at free drawing. It is often appropriate as expression work for a story or a history lesson, while the nature lesson should be followed by a chance to draw what has been talked about. Thus some of the drawing is already in the hands of the teacher of other subjects. It is the teacher's sympathy with small children which helps him to be successful in interpreting their drawings, even though he is not an expert.

Courses in the new methods should be given to students in training. The first thing is to get them to love art and to attempt to paint and model and draw freely. This is necessary before they themselves can learn methods of teaching art; but in the course of one or two years' training in general subjects, it ought to be practicable to accomplish this, even with only two or three hours each week for the work. When students begin to teach art, they may not get very good results. This may be because they are not sure of their aim and hesitate between what they want to do themselves and what they have been told to do by the art teacher at the training school. (The latter should be able to get far better work out of children in the model school than the students can.) But when the students have become teachers, those who have some taste for art will get good work from their classes.

The training school gives the art teacher a great chance to teach his students to discriminate between different types of work done by children. Students in training should bring the work done by their pupils to the art teacher and he will show, by a few comments, what is admirable and what is not.

### *Exhibitions*

In art we learn largely by what we see, not merely by what we are told or taught to do. So there is great benefit in having refresher courses and exhibitions of children's work, to which teachers may come and learn what children can do. Magazines showing reproductions of Child Art, pictures and books from other countries, all help to bring the new outlook in school art before teachers and inspire them to try them with their own pupils.



*Self-training*

Whatever his previous training, the art teacher should be constantly training himself. He will learn by what other people do, but he should also learn from his own experience. He will note which methods seem fruitful and which do not. When his class grows bored, he will try a different approach and note its success for future use.

It is as possible to go wrong in the new fashions as in the old and a teacher must use his initiative and common sense, especially in applying to Indian conditions methods discovered in the West. The books, for instance, lay great emphasis on work done with large brushes on large sheets of paper. Indian children furnished with large brushes have been seen in case after case to exchange them for fine brushes at the first opportunity. They also often prefer a small-sized drawing. When we remember that our pupils belong to the nation that produced the Mogul miniatures, we should hesitate before we compel them to do large-scale work. Powder paint has its advantages, but if the only paper to be used is in drawing notebooks we find that it leaves a dirty smudge on the opposite page and often rubs off. In such circumstances it may be wise to use water colours but we can obtain an opaque effect if we wish by allowing pupils to mix white freely with their colour. The rule should be to do the thing we ourselves think best in each particular case, keeping an open mind for suggestions from other people, but not following any method slavishly, either because it is traditional or even because it is new.

The pupils' progress is very gradual. The teacher may look at the work being done and realize that it is not what he wants. Racking his brains for some means of improving the work of children at this stage, he may see some point on which he can work, or make some constructive suggestion that will help a few of the class to go forward. From a book or an exhibition he may gather one new suggestion worth trying which will make all the difference between failure and success. He may, for a change, experiment with potato prints, or struggle, with the help of a book, to develop puppetry, or pose a figure in an unfamiliar position for the class to draw. Any one of these suggestions may be enough to arouse enthusiasm for six weeks



or more. A teacher begins to know intuitively what will 'go' with his class, so that by spending time in thinking out beforehand what he shall take in the lesson and having the apparatus ready, he inspires them and achieves success.

### *Training art specialists*

Art teachers for the high school and training school will need specialized training. They will naturally spend time acquiring technical proficiency in art and art crafts, but there are two other things that the art teacher needs quite as much. One is the understanding of the pupils' development in art, carrying further what has already been said about understanding the thought behind little children's work. The other is a general appreciation of art which can only come from a discriminating study of great art, some suggestions for which are outlined in Chapter 18.

The following is a suggestion for a course suitable for school art specialists.

#### A. PRACTICAL WORK

1. Several art crafts to be studied along lines suitable for use in high schools.
2. Drawing and painting, from sight and from memory, of objects and figures. Use of water colour and powder or tempera colour.
3. Imaginative compositions, with both figures and landscapes.
4. Ability to make designs of various kinds. Some practical knowledge of the designs suitable for textiles, for carpets, for carving, metalwork and pottery.
5. Lettering, lay-out and poster work.
6. Studies of natural forms, plants and other kinds, and their use in design.

#### B. ART APPRECIATION

An elementary acquaintance with the following types of art :

1. Drawings of primitive man.
2. Indian architecture and sculpture, especially of the locality.
3. Indian drawing and painting.

4. The art of China and Japan.
5. Art in the West (medieval, renaissance and modern).
6. Folk art in India. Traditional dance costumes. Costume study. Traditional toys.
7. Art in articles of ordinary life, e.g. metalwork, woodwork, embroidery.
8. Visits to places where art crafts (such as handblock printing, toymaking, etc.) are practised in the locality. Acquaintance with their methods.

### C. PEDAGOGY, OR HOW TO TEACH ART

I. *The systematic study of child art* through lectures, illustrated books and a good selection of actual children's work.

1. The development of childish symbolism, especially with regard to representation of figures.
2. Childish ways of drawing patterns.
3. The development from symbolism to realism compared with the similar development in the history of art.
4. Different types of artistic expression corresponding to different temperaments.

#### II. *Methods of teaching*

1. Use of materials. Where to obtain materials and how to prepare them. Suitable appliances.
2. Class management in art teaching.
3. Appraisalment of work.
4. The actual giving of practical lessons, chiefly to children under twelve.





## APPENDIXES

## BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

## A

THE following books deal with the theory and practice of Child Art and are arranged in their probable order of value for an Indian school. Publishers' names are given in brackets to help intending purchasers ; unless otherwise stated, their place of business is London.

*The Teaching of Art in Schools* by E. Gibbs (Williams and Norgate). This is a very good book, well illustrated. It sets forth the theory and practice of Child Art as carried out in some English elementary schools. Besides imaginative painting, it deals in a practical way with appliqué work, potato cuts, lino cuts and pattern making.

*Child Art* by W. Viola (University of London Press). This book describes Child Art as it was started in Vienna and has been practised in England. The author worked with Professor Cizek and has lectured to teachers all over England and Scotland. It contains many examples of children's work, a very interesting series of questions and answers from teachers' refresher classes about new methods, and accounts of classes held by Professor Cizek himself. Many doubts and objections regarding new methods are dealt with.

*Children as Artists* by R. R. Tomlinson (Penguin Books). A small book giving a number of pictures by children, in colour and monochrome, and an account of the growth of Child Art.

*Education through Art* by Herbert Read (Faber and Faber). This is a very important book setting forth a theory of education that has had much effect in educational circles in the West. It contains many examples of children's drawings and much psychological analysis of them. It is a very difficult book to understand but contains a wealth of material. The latter part is somewhat easier and very stimulating.

*Art and the Child* by Marion Richardson (University of London Press). This book is by a pioneer of Child Art in England who was largely responsible for its development there.



especially in London elementary schools. It is an interesting account of her teaching career and contains numerous examples of her pupils' work in colour and monochrome.

*Teaching Creative Art in Schools* by R. and A. Eccot (Evans). Contains a wealth of illustrations. Includes paper cut pictures and posters.

*Beginnings : Teaching Art to Children* by M. McLeish (Studio Ltd., 'How to do it' series). Contains illustrations of children's work and introduces many kinds of art crafts. Very artistic and inspiring. It does not contain as much practical instruction as the other books.

*Creative Teaching in Art* by V. E. D'Amico (International Textbook Co., Scranton 9, Penn., U. S. A.). This well-illustrated book is by the art director of Teachers College, Columbia. This institution has been one of the pioneers in school art in America. It presupposes a great deal more equipment in every direction than is usually available in India.

*Art and Regeneration* by M. Petrie (Paul Elek). A well-illustrated book that tells of the part art is playing in the curative treatment of physically and mentally defective adults and children.

## B

The following pamphlets and books deal with individual crafts. They are a few of the least expensive of many books on their subjects. Many other books deal with the subjects elaborately, suggesting materials not available in India and describing the manufacture of objects not used in India. In most cases, therefore, the teacher will have to adapt and invent methods of work for Indian conditions.

Dryad Handicrafts and the Dryad Press (Leicester, England) produce many books and much material and apparatus for all kinds of handicraft work such as lino-printing, weaving on small looms, stick printing, etc. They sell coloured inks, yarns, felts and many other appliances. Indian schools might find it useful to buy these in small quantities as examples of what can be done, though recognizing that it is better and cheaper to use indigenous materials for the bulk of school handwork. Dryad Handicrafts publish a price list of tools, equipment and materials.

*Dryad Leaflets* (8d. each) give instructions in different occupations. A few out of many are listed here :

- 17. *Pattern Making with Simple Shapes*
- 22. *Stencilling on Paper and Fabrics*
- 57. *Stick Printing*
- 74. *Two Methods of Marbling*
- 93. *Making Papier Mache*
- 96. *Painting for Children*
- 106. *Linoleum Cutting and Printing*
- 108. *Pattern Making with Cut Paper*
- 123. *Doll Making with the Professional Touch*

The next eleven books are also published by the Dryad Press :—

- Hand Puppets and String Puppets* by W. S. Lanchester.
- Rag Bag Toys* by W. S. Lanchester
- Children's Work in Block Printing* by R. Tanner
- Lettering for Children* by R. Tanner
- Modelling* by M. Petrie
- Cut Paper Work* by P. Cox
- Dryad Standard Alphabet Cards*
- Dressed Soft Toys* by L. Moody
- Making Soft Toys* by C. E. Edlmann
- Canework* by C. Crampton
- Raffia Work and Basketry* by J. H. Crampton
- I Made my own Dolls* by T. Stowell (Thacker, Bombay)
- Needlework in Education* by T. Graham (Longmans)
- Colour* by B. Carpenter (Batsford)
- Adventures with Puppets* by E. B. Beard (Oxford)
- Athene*<sup>1</sup>

## C

The following books may be of use to those wishing to study the history of art in India and art appreciation. Three small books are mentioned on art in the West, on which subject there is a large literature. One history of art is then given—a large book, providing a valuable and readable account of the art of all ages, with due prominence to Oriental art. A fairly comprehensive list is given of the chief books on art in India. Most

<sup>1</sup>The magazine of the Society for Education in Art (29 Tavistock Square, London).



of the books are large and expensive and some of them are out of print, but they can be consulted in libraries.

*What is Art?* by Herbert Read (Faber and Faber)

*Vision and Design* by Roger Fry (Penguin Books)

*Miniature History of European Art* by R. H. Wilenski (Oxford)

*A World History of Art* by Sheldon Cheney (Cape)

*Indian Art through the Ages* (Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi)

*Mughal Painting* (Faber Gallery of Oriental Art)

*Rajput Painting* (Faber Gallery of Oriental Art)

*History of Fine Art in India and Ceylon* by Vincent A. Smith (Oxford)

*Handbook of Indian Art* by E. B. Havell (John Murray)

*Indian Sculpture and Painting* by E. B. Havell (John Murray)

*Ideals of Indian Art* by E. B. Havell (John Murray)

*History of Indian and Indonesian Art* by A. K. Coomaraswamy (Edward Goldston)

*Rajput Painting* by A. K. Coomaraswamy (Edward Goldston)

*Studies in Indian Painting* by N. C. Mehta (Taraporevala, Bombay)

*Ajanta Frescoes. Text and Plates, Parts I-IV*, edited by G. Yazdani (Oxford)

*My Pilgrimages to Ajanta and Bagh* by Mukul Dey (Oxford)

*At Ajanta* by K. H. Vakil (Taraporevala, Bombay)

*Court Painters of the Great Moguls* by L. Binyon (Edward Arnold)

*Indian Painting under the Mughals* by Percy Brown (Oxford)

*Indian Painting* by Percy Brown (Y. M. C. A. Publishing House, Calcutta)

*Masterpieces of Rajput Painting* by O. C. Gangoly (Rupa, Calcutta)

*Folk Art of Bengal* by Ajit Mookerjee (University of Calcutta Press)

## D

Coloured reproductions of pictures (chiefly Western) are to be found in the numerous publications of the Phaidon Press,

in the Faber Gallery Books, and in *The National and Tate Galleries* by R. N. D. Wilson (Nelson).

Reproductions on postcards of specimens of Oriental art are obtainable from the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



## SYLLABUS IN DRAWING AND PAINTING FOR MADRAS SECONDARY SCHOOLS<sup>1</sup>

### FORMS I TO III

*Aim of course.*—To give all pupils scope for self-expression through drawing, painting and allied crafts. To train expression of their imaginative ideas, their appreciation of natural beauty, sense of rhythm, harmony of line and form. To give them the joy of doing creative work.

To teach them to appreciate Indian art in painting and design and architecture.

To help them to carry out their ideas by means of simple art crafts which can be fairly easily learnt and carried out by secondary-school pupils; by this means also to give them training in care and manual dexterity.

*Equipment.*—No special room is required for the middle-school art work.

*Materials.*—Pencil, pastel, powder-colour paint, water-colour paint, drawing notebooks and large sheets of white and coloured paper. Materials for the art crafts.

*Number of periods.*—Form I: at least two periods per week. Forms II and III: one period per week.

*Distribution of work.*—Some work under each heading should be taken in each form, a higher standard being expected in the higher forms.

*Evaluation of work.*—Each completed piece of work should be marked on a five-point scale, A, B, C, D, E, corresponding to the rating, excellent, good, very fair, fair, poor.

### Types of Work

1. *Free illustration.*—Scenes from daily life, home, school, bazaar, from literature and history, from legends, from religious

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted by kind permission of the Director of Public Instruction, Madras, by whom we are asked to state that the syllabuses in Appendixes 2 and 3 have been accepted by the Board of Secondary Education, Madras, up to the end of the school year 1950-1 only.

stories and from the pupil's own imagination. Individual objects from memory such as motor cars, bandies, etc.

Pencil, crayon and paint may be used. The aim should be the expression of the pupil's own ideas rather than correct representation.

2. *Nature drawing*.—Drawing and painting of plant forms from nature and memory, flowers, fruit, sprays, etc.

3. *Object drawing*.—Drawing from observation and memory of objects of interest to pupils. These may also be painted.

4. *Pattern work*.—Making and colouring of patterns for borders, all-over patterns, book covers, etc. Use simple abstract unit and vernacular letter forms for this.

Free use of brush or pastel without previous pencil drawing should be encouraged.

5. *Art crafts*.—Cut paper work, stick printing, paste papers and marbling, clay modelling, potato printing and simple papier mâché work.

*N.B.*—Work of a high degree of accuracy and finish is not expected at this stage. All work should be original and not copied.

#### FORMS IV TO VI

At least two consecutive periods per week should be given to art.

The subsidiary or general course for Forms IV to VI [see pp. 156-8] may also be followed for arts under the arts and crafts group of the other types of courses in the new scheme.

*Aim of course*.—To give all pupils scope for self-expression through drawing, painting and allied crafts. To train expression of their imaginative ideas, their appreciation of natural beauty, sense of rhythm, harmony of line and form. To give them the joy of doing creative work.

To teach them to appreciate Indian art in painting and design and architecture.

To help them to carry out their ideas by means of simple art crafts which can be fairly easily learnt and carried out by secondary-school pupils; by this means also to give them training in care and manual dexterity.

*Equipment*.—A separate room should be available for art



and art crafts with almirahs and shelves for keeping materials and facilities for displaying finished work on the walls.

*Media and materials.*—Pencil, pastel, powder-colour paint, water-colour paint, materials for the art crafts. Drawing notebooks; also large sheets of white and coloured paper.

### Types of Drawing and Painting

1. *Free illustration or picture making.*—Scenes from daily life—home, school, bazaar—and from literature and history. Scenes from school life: games, expeditions. Pictures of daily work: agriculture, street scenes. Scenes from legends and religious stories and imaginative scenes of the pupils' own invention.

The aim should be to give expression to the pupil's own ideas. The work should aim at showing good composition, vitality and observation rather than literal or photographic representation. Correct perspective is not to be expected from average pupils.

2. *Nature drawing.*—Drawing and painting of natural forms from observation and from memory. This may include drawing of flowers, leaves, sprays, fruit, trees, shells, insects and a few animals and birds.

3. *Figure study.*—Studies from observation and from memory of familiar figures, e.g. class-mates in various poses, dhobis, carpenters, ploughmen at work, women cooking and carrying water, dancers, gypsies, clowns.

The interest, vitality and decorativeness of the work should count rather than correct proportion and anatomy.

4. *Design.*—Making and colouring of patterns for borders, all-over work, book covers and tiles. Use of simple abstract units, of patterns based on letter forms and numbers; also use of natural forms—such as leaves, flowers, shells.

Method of simple repetition of unit, reversing unit, drop repeat and counterchange.

Use of designs for book covers, calendars, greetings cards, programmes, etc.

5. *Poster work and lettering.*—Practice in lettering, large and small, local language, Hindi and English, with pens and brushes.

*Lay-out.*—Making of notices and posters for school activities.

### Distribution of Work

Some work under these headings will be taken in *each* of the Forms IV to VI. It will be done in a more elementary way at first and to a higher standard towards the end of the course.

In each year, one or more of the following art crafts should be taken. Lino cutting and carving are the most difficult. The others can be taken in any form according to the convenience of the school.

### Art Crafts

1. *Potato block printing.*
2. *Stencilling.*—With original designs on paper and fabric.
3. *Clay-modelling.*—Copy of natural forms and modelling and painting of objects and figures. Amateur bas-relief with designs and figures modelled and painted.
4. *Papier mache.*—Toys and vessels to be made, painted and varnished.
5. *Puppetry.*—Making of puppets. Puppet plays.
6. *Embroidery* (for girls).—Carrying out of original designs on jackets, sari borders, cushions, curtains, table cloths, etc.
7. *Lino cutting and block printing.*—Cutting of original blocks for pictures or patterns and printing on paper and on fabric.
8. *Carving.*—In plaster of paris, salt and wood.

### Art Appreciation

Pupils should have the chance to see some good reproductions of Indian pictures, including the Ajanta and Mogul schools, and have talks on methods and characteristics of Indian art and the difference between Eastern and Western art. They should also compare their own efforts with prints of primitive art and make some study of objects such as brass or carpets showing Indian designs.

### Evaluation of Work

Each completed piece of work should be evaluated on a five-point scale, A, B, C, D, E, equivalent to excellent, good, very fair, fair, poor.



## SYLLABUS IN DRAWING AND PAINTING (SPECIAL) FOR THE AESTHETIC & DOMESTIC COURSES IN MADRAS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

### FORMS IV TO VI

*Aims.*—This course is meant for pupils with some taste for art, some of whom will wish to take up art chiefly as a hobby. In addition to the aims of the general course, it seeks to develop more fully the pupils' natural gifts for art, to develop powers of appreciation, observation and skill in representation, to acquaint them with various art crafts and give them some experience of what is meant by industrial and commercial art and the techniques of fine art, so that they may be able to discover whether they have abilities to follow these subjects as a profession by further study. It will also be a good preliminary course for those who wish to become art teachers. It also seeks to acquaint pupils with the great art of some different periods and countries and help them to understand the principles of good art.

Those who have not already done the general course for Forms I to III should go through it first. They should also at one time or another cover all the work detailed in the general course for Forms IV to VI [see pp. 253-5]. *The syllabus given below should be divided on a concentric plan for the respective forms.*

*Equipment.*—A separate room should be available for art and art crafts with almirahs and shelves for keeping materials and facilities for displaying finished work on the walls. Materials for the art crafts and suitable receptacles to store them. Good quality water-colour paints and brushes will be necessary for these pupils and painting paper. Powder colours and large sheets of common paper will also be used.

1. *Illustration and composition.*—Free picture-making of all kinds : scenes from daily life, history, legend, imagination as

in general course. This should include making large pictures with powder paint (tempera). These should grow in unity, harmony of line and form and colour and vital interpretation of the subject, each pupil developing his own style.

2. *Drawing of natural forms.*—Pupils should make careful and accurate studies from observation and memory of plants, trees, shells, insects, birds and animals, giving some attention to structural form.

3. *Figure drawing.*—Drawing of clothed and partially clothed figures from sight and from memory, in various poses and various costumes. Study of bodily structure, proportion, correct representation of figures in different poses. Studies of head, hands, feet, etc., in different positions.

4. *Perspective.*—An elementary course in perspective, working from direct observation of objects and buildings.

5. *Outdoor sketching and landscape.*—(a) Students should keep a notebook of snapshot sketches of what they see out of doors. (b) Students should make sketches of their impressions of scenes, landscapes, street scenes, interiors, etc., and either bring the sketches indoors to paint or paint them on the spot. They should learn to recognize and use attractive compositions when they see them and also to invent good compositions of their own.

6. *Design : Introduction to industrial art.*—As in the general course but reaching a higher standard : making covers for books, portfolios, etc., with brush patterns, stencilling, potato and lino prints. Lino printing on fabric for scarves, curtains, cushions, blouses. General principles of design based on plant forms, common objects, etc. Designs for pottery, jewellery, tiles, embroidery, small box lids, etc., some of these to be carried out in the craft classes. Study of Indian, Persian and Chinese designs for textiles and pottery. Some study of the processes of professional art craftsmen.

7. *Introduction to commercial art.*—Lettering: principles of good and bad lettering and lay-out. Making of posters and study of what makes a good poster, show card, greeting card, advertisement, book cover, etc.

8. *Art crafts.*—The school will specialize in three or four of the following, carrying them up to a considerable standard



of proficiency, but not using elaborate professional apparatus, but studying the local handicraft methods in use :—

- (i) Pottery and clay work.
- (ii) Lino cuts and fabric printing.
- (iii) Puppetry and papier maché work
- (iv) Mural decoration.
- (v) Art in the home (for girls).
- (vi) Dress design and costume study (for girls)
- (vii) Embroidery (for girls).
- (viii) Book-making, book-binding, designing of covers and endpapers and illustrations.
- (ix) Carving in salt, plaster of paris or wood.
- (x) Art of the theatre : costumes, back cloths, stage effects.

9. *Art appreciation*.—Study of reproductions of art objects from Mohenjodaro and other primitive artists. Comparison of those from India with those from other countries and with free work of modern children. Pupils to be able to describe six such objects and their merits.

Study of reproductions of Ajanta frescoes. Pupils to study and describe at least six reproductions. They should know the general method and purpose of the frescoes and compare them with reproductions of fresco work from Italy of the great period. Study of the Mogul and Rajput schools. Pupils to compare these with paintings of court scenes and royal personages of Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Study of Indian landscape painting of various typical kinds. Comparison with Chinese landscape.

Study of Dravidian and Indo-Saracenic architecture from pictures and from local examples.

Study of Indian sculpture.

Comparison of Indian design with Persian and Chinese designs for textiles, pottery and jewellery.

Some acquaintance with modern trends of Indian art, with Impressionists, etc. (For this an album of selected prints and short textbooks are necessary.)

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